



# EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS

## ANCIENT INDIA

(c. 1500 to 10th Century B C)

THE 1926-26 READERSHIP LECTURES,

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## PREFACE.

There is no complete and standard History of Indian Education. Some monographs have recently appeared about educational activities in medieval and modern India and that for limited periods but Ancient India has not yet been thoroughly studied from the point of view of Educational History and the one or two available booklets on the subject of Ancient Indian Education are much too meagre uncritical sweeping and misleading.

A History of Education for one important region of the world with a distinct remarkable ancient and long continued civilization of its own must be based on a good deal of laborious gathering in of details from a vast mass of original sources and critical historical studies in them. That is to say works of reliable reference have first to be compiled which may be termed Source Books for a History of Indian Education before this History itself can be attempted. Any text book writer acquainted with Education as a science and with general histories of educational thought and institutions will then be able to handle these source books and prepare a text book for use in the Education Faculties of Universities. Writers on histories of European Education have not ignored this important condition and accordingly we have works like Mongee's Source Books of Educational History Rashdall's Medieval Universities or Freeman's Schools of Hellas.

These lectures constitute a first contribution to a comprehensive Source Book for a future standard History of Indian Education. Two very important original sources for the Earliest Indian Educational Ideas and Institutions have been ransacked here and critically examined and I believe students of and writers on Indian Education will find here reliable solid matter to build upon.

I am aware that to the average reader who is not thoroughly acquainted with the technicalities, methods and latest results of Oriental studies and researches, a good portion of the matter of these lectures may remain unintelligible and doubtful, or strange and unfamiliar,—for training in historical criticism and rational appreciation of ancient or indigenous culture and civilization are still rather rare in our educated circles. For greater facility in closely following the subject-matter of these lectures, therefore, I would suggest a parallel study (along with the earlier writings of Zimmer, Macdonell and Keith and Winternitz, on Vedic culture and society) of Pargiter's "Ancient Indian Historical Tradition" and my "Aspects of the Earliest Social History of India" (both published by Oxf. Univ. Press, 1922 and 1928), in fact these three works are complements of one another in many ways.

I intend some day to continue this collection of materials for a future History of Indian Education, at least of Ancient Indian Education and I have a fully chalked out scheme for this. At present my studies in the Mahābhāratan and Purāṇic tradition from this standpoint are proving as promising and interesting as those in the Atharva veda and the Rāmāyaṇic tradition.

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# PART I

## ATHARVA VEDIC SOURCES

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Of all the Vedas the complex Atharva veda or the Veda of the Bhṛgu and Āhگیرasa r̥ṣi teachers appears to be the most important source for the quest of educational information about very early ages. Thus more than 40 of its mantras refer directly to the student life (1). It is significant that this Veda begins and practically ends with ceremonial formulæ for admission to and dismissal from school studies (2). The Yajur and Sāma vedas are very much limited in their scope concentrating on individual tribal or royal sacrifices and on the mystic ritual of Soma intoxication respectively the R̥k collection is perceptibly heterogeneous there being streaks of pure poetry traditional history philosophy and magic in that ritualistic block but though this Veda has taken many things from the Atharvāvic collection it has not incorporated from this much about the teachers and the taught. The prominence of their affairs in the Atharva veda probably indicates that the first and chief educators of Vedic India were the Āhگیرasas (and Bhṛgus). This agrees fully with the conclusions regarding early political and social history recently arrived at or suggested by the Purāṇic and Vedic studies of Pargiter in his *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* and of myself in my *Aspects of Ancient Indian Social History* viz. that certain non-Aīla (or pre-Āryan) priestly groups—chiefly the Āhگیرasas—were instrumental in the development

(1) *E.g.* I 1, 9, 30, 34; II 27, 29; III 8, 31; IV 1, 9, 10, 13, 31; V 17; VI 1, 38, 40, 48, 53, 56, 58, 69; 1, 108, 130; VII 12, 16, 32, 33, 53, 54, 56, 61, 66, 68, 82, 89, 105, 106, 109; VIII 1, 2, 3, 4; XI 5; XIX 19, 68, 71, 2, etc.

(2) AV I 1 and AV XIX 71, 72 respectively

of a brāhmanical hierarchy and in the brāhmapization of the Āryan states(1), and that most of the basic elements of the so-called Vedic or Āryan civilization can be traced to the Āṅgirasas, or other cognate groups, belonging to the Lower Gangetic region(2)

The passages in the AV having any educational significance, may be broadly divided into—(A) those dealing with the manifold ceremonial essential for full admission into Vedic studentship (3)—(B) those referring to the completion of Vedic studies and 'school leaving' (4)—(C) those describing student-life in general (5), —and (D) those incidentally alluding to facts of educational importance(6) It would be necessary first to critically examine these four classes of sources, severally and in detail,—leaving inferences to look after themselves

AV I, 1 gives us some of the formulæ (7) which were used, on a student's entrance upon Vedic study (8), with the

(1) Pargiter AIHT p. 306 ff

(2) Sarkar AISH, chs on Building Activities, Furniture, Dress and Costumes, etc

(3) AV I 1, 9, III 8, 31, IV 1, 9, 10, 13, VI 38, 40, 48 53, 56, 58, 69, 71, 108, 133, VII 32, 33, 53, 56, 61, 72, 82, 105, VIII 1, 2, X 4, XI 5, XIX 68

(4) AV I 30, II 29, IV 31, VII 89, XIX 71, 72

(5) AV V 17, VI 71, VII 16, 66, 67, 106, 109, XI 5, XVIII 3, XIX 19, 72

(6) AV I 24, 25, 32, 34, II 1, III 8, 15, 17, 30, IV 1, V 23, VI 1 64, 94, VII 12, 54, VIII 9, 10, X 2, 7, 8, XI 8, XII 2, XVIII 2

(7) "The thrice seven 'śrutās' that go about bearing all forms, let the Vācaspati assign to me their powers, their selves" (v 1) "Come again, O Vācaspati, together with divine mind, O 'Lord of wealth', make it stay in me, in myself, be what is 'śrutā'" (v 2) "Just here stretch thou on, as it were the two tips of the bow with the bowstring, let the Lord of Speech (vācaspati) make fast in me, in myself, be what is 'śrutā'" (v 3) "Called on is the Lord of Speech, on us let the Lord of Speech call, may we be united with what is 'śrutā', let me not be parted with what is 'śrutā'" (v 4) Cf AV, VII, 61, which has a similar prayer for (retention of 'śrutā', and for wisdom and longevity, at reception of a Vedic student (cf Kauś 10, 22 and 57, 23)

(8) Kauś 139, 10

special objects of ensuring his retention of sacred learning<sup>(1)</sup> or of inducing intellectuality in him<sup>(2)</sup> or generally for the academic welfare of the Vedic student<sup>(3)</sup> In v 1 here *śrutā* refers to scholars hearers or learners of *śruti* i.e. Vedic as well as Purāṇic lore—for *śruti* in ancient times signified both<sup>(4)</sup> bearing all forms is usually taken to mean of all ages—but in that way it might also mean of all classes castes or communities more probably it is a Vedic idiom for decorated with designs<sup>(5)</sup> its use in this context suggests uniforms or academic dresses of different types for the scholars referred to—whose powers and whose very spirits the fresher asks the Vācaspati (the Lord of Speech or the Language Master) to assign to him on the day of his admission evidently these emulated scholars were seniors or fellows who went about in connection with the admission ceremonies to the number of thrice seven—which may or may not mean 21 exactly this is apparently an idiom for dozens or scores it is possible however that the admission ceremonial required the presence of 21 senior scholars or fellows of the teaching institution each of the 7 original brāhmaṇic orders<sup>(6)</sup> being represented by 3 such—The next three verses illustrate the Vedic conception of memory as a mental function The elements of will effort and tension is graphically described by the simile of the bow string whatever is learnt is supposed to become part of the self and the listener becomes united with what is heard never to be parted again,—a mnemonic process as we would say v 1 would suggest a belief that mental powers like memory could be induced in a subject by his dwelling

(1) That is the usual title of the piece

(2) Kauś. 10. 1

(3) Kauś. 11. 1

(4) Cf. AITB Ch. I

(5) Being used in the same sense in the RV

(6) Ātreyas, Kātyāyana, Bhārgavas, Āṅgirasas Vīśāmitras Vāśiṣṭhas and Pulastyas (Agastya Pulaha and Kratus being included) These orders had distinct styles of hair-dressing and costumes (cf. AITB),



on other present powerful minds,—or as we should say, by auto-suggestion ‘Retention’ is ‘divine mind’, in the gift of (the divine or human) Vācaspati, to be obtained or realised not so much by ‘calling on’ or invoking him, as by *his* responsive ‘call’ or favour,—the student meeting him half way as it were —It is not clearly stated who this ‘Vācaspati’ is. Ordinarily he can be taken as the presiding deity of Vāc or Logos (1), but a separate mystic ‘mantra’ wholly in praise of Vāc (2) is used at the ceremony of ‘medhā-janana’ (or genesis of intellection) of an infant, or when the child first uses speech, later on, again, when the child becomes an adult, and having passed through Vedic studentship is finally dismissed for entry into life, the same ‘mantra’ in praise of Vāc is applied, here, then, “calling on” ‘Vācaspati’ and ‘receiving a call from him’, may or may not refer to the spirit of Vāc, it seems more probable that with verse 1 the candidate expresses his ambition, and by verses 2—4 he formally ‘calls on,’ or applies in person to the authorities holding the admission ceremony that the ‘Master of Speech’ here is the chief teacher of the school, the ‘Logician’ (‘vācas-pati’), who, along with its ‘Master of Riches’, is requested by the student to help him, in developing intellectual powers and in treasuring them, respectively, it is to be noted that a ‘Master of Riches’ is mentioned along with the Warden or ‘Gopa’ of the school, in another part of the admission ceremonial (3)

The sort of mental ability or intelligence (‘medhā’) the new-coming pupil wishes to be developed in himself (4), is best described in the words of his formal prayer “Do thou, “O Intelligence, come to us with the profusion of kine, the “vigour of steeds, and the brilliance of sun’s rays’ (5),

(1) Cf Weber Ind Stud, IX (1865), 473, for this parallelism with the Greek conception

(2) AV IV 31

(3) *Vide infra*

(4) AV, VI, 108, with Kauś, 10, 26

(5) AV VI 108, 1.

this intelligence is as it were a powerful and divine drink (1) filled with brahman quickened with brahman esteemed by ṛṣis and quaffed imbibed and augmented (2) by Vedic students (3) they desired an all round intelligence the intellect possessed by the Rbhus the Asuras and the Rṣis — may that enter into me (4) —referring respectively to the mechanical materialistic and theological excellences achieved by the Rbhus Asuras and Rṣis of tradition (5); mental powers again are to remain constant during the continuous teaching and study in the Vedic school distributed throughout the day (6) — Medha for the morning for the evening for the noontide and while the sun's rays last (7) delighting in the prospect of his persistent intellectual penance the student prays for the success of that tapas (exertion) (8)

But memory and intelligence are not the only desirable things for the candidates for Vedic studentship (9) as they are admitted to it they joyfully exclaim We have become united with splendour healthy nourishment (lit fatness payas ) able bodies ( tanu ) and propitious mind (or with discipline and exertion, acc to a var lect tapas ) may the Tvaṣṭr now make for us here wider room and smooth down what of our body is injured (10) —The

(1) Cf other allusions to drink in Vedic schools, e.g. AV VI 29

(2) periphrasis from pi as well as pyā

(3) AV VI 108 2

(4) AV VI 108 3

(5) It would be instructive to collect together all the Vedic and Epic Purāṇic references to the arts and crafts opulence and splendour of the Rbhus and Asuras, and to the priestcraft and poetry of brāhmanical Rṣis. These three were among the many ethnic strata of Vedic India.

(6) The Vedic time table clearly reflects a completely residential system of schooling. The epics also refer to night studies at the āśrama of the Vedic period (e.g. Kāṇḍ and Bṛhatā night studies at Uddālaka's āśrama).

(7) AV VI 108 3

(8) AV VII 61, cf. Kāṇḍ 10 22 and 67 23

(9) Of the physical and material excellences desired by the pupil in  
AV VI. 38

(10) AV VI 63 8

physical aspects of studentship are here emphasised, the apprehension of the freshers that there may not be room enough in the school for them, and that their robust bodies might suffer injuries or wasting by going through studentship, and their youthful pride of health and spirits, give a touching human tone to the ceremonial formula. The 'Tvastṛ' who is solicited 'to make wider room', i.e. to make suitable residential arrangements, for the students, and he who is 'to smooth or fill up injured or wasted bodies', would seem here to be the chief Sanitary Builder of the school settlement, and its Physician,—the stone-setter and the bone-setter,—who are alluded to, as much as the skilful god of that name. We shall presently note another allusion to the school doctor in the admission ceremonial (1), that to a school 'Tvastṛ' perhaps indicates that temporary light-built cottages were set up near the teachers' houses to serve as hostels, either for extra students in years of rush, or normally, in which case these must have been frequently repaired or rebuilt under the 'Tvastṛ's' supervision. The new-comer, however, would not feel secure about his housing and health, until he had committed himself to the care of the Head Master as well so in fact we find him wishing, on his introduction to Vedic Study (2),—"May I be dear here unto the 'giver of sacrificial gifts'" (i.e., 'the bounteous Master', an euphemism for the chief teacher or 'kula-pati' in an 'āśrama') (3).

The fresher is anxious not only for the goodwill of the school authorities, but also for influence, reputation and popularity amongst his fellows, at initiation he thus addresses the god Agni "I receive thy fire within me, with strength, brilliance, and dominating power"(4), on beginning Vedic study (5) he formally prays for "the glory that is in strong

(1) AV X 4, 15

(2) Cf Kauś 139, 15

(3) AV. VI 58, 1.

(4) AV VII 82, Cf Kauś 57, 1

(5) Cf Kauś 139, 15

drink as it is poured out (referring to the white effervescent froth compared to foam conventionally) for the honey that is in sweet wines (referring apparently to the taste of madhu or mahuṣa liquor)—so that he may speak brilliant words amongst those people (1) Here the student speaks in a different characteristic vein he is warmed up at the prospect of speeches and debates warm in more senses than one as we shall see later on drinking was in those times a perfectly polite and customary enjoyment in domestic as well as public or academic life (2) and it is not improbable that here we have in this mantra a relic of a lost tradition of jolly and warm College Unions this entrance formula itself would be specially appropriate if it were accompanied by the drinking of a formal toast

AV I 2 and other passages so far dealt with give the admitted students point of view while I 9 gives that of the teacher admitting him It is one of many passages illustrating the sort of professorial utterances at the reception of a Vedic student (3) The teacher here wishes the fresher advancement and success supremacy (śraśṭhyā) over class fellows (sajātaḥ) and attainment of the same acquisitions (vittāni) and mental powers (cittāni) as his rivals (sapatnāḥ)—thus incubating him with a spirit of healthy emulation from the very start (4) The teacher sympathises with the youthful pupil's ambition of addressing brilliant words to his fellows by offering him a higher goal to strive after Ascend O man, he exhorts this immortal smooth coursing

(1) AV VI 69 12 (used I K us op cit with VI 38 39 58 etc.)

(2) Cf e.g., AV lit 30; sp v 6

(3) Cf Kauś 55 17 for uses of AV I 9 and other examples

(4) AV I 9 2-4. The śraśṭhyā or position of śraśṭhi is over the jāta the class form; probably the class prefect or monitor was called a śraśṭhi; cf similar well known ancient use of this term with reference to trade guilds and associations; sa jāta here cannot mean of the same caste for jāta or jāti—caste is unknown to the Bṛahmināḥ; so here it should mean of the same group

chariot (meaning the course of studentship), then shalt thou, in advanced age, speak to the Councils ('vidatha')"(1) — Evidently these teachers knew that they were educating the masters of the people, here is at least a clear indication that the Vedic Elders were mostly educated persons of mature age, who had passed through a longstanding, traditional and smoothly-working school system, advancing progressively to a goal like a smoothly running chariot

In AV I 30, we find the student receiving on admission the blessings of his teacher for long life and protection of the gods, VII 53 is similarly addressed by teacher to pupil at initiation for his longevity, the same solicitude is expressed in III 31, IV 9, 10 & 13, VIII 1 & 2 The physical well-being of the pupil is indeed as much a concern of the teacher as his spiritual progress Thus after initiation as Vedic Scholar, rites were performed for the immunity of the pupil from consumption ('yaksnā') and mishaps ('ārti') (2), or from jaundice ('hārīta'), malarial fever ('takman'), 'balāsa' (dropsy ?), etc,—as much as from evil dreaming, evil deeds, falsehood or pollution (3) It is remarkable that rites and precautions for safety from snake-bites or insect-stings occupy a prominent place amongst the admission ceremonies Thus AV IV 9 seeks to guard the pupil against snake-bites, VI 56 is a 'serpent' charm used for protection at the commencement of Vedic study (4), VII 56 contains snake as well as insect charms for the same application (5), such charms, together with herbs and drugs (6), were applied to the newly admitted pupils by a person who is hailed

(1) AV. VIII 1, 6

(2) AV III 31, cf Kaus 58, 3

(3) AV IV 9

(4) Cf Kauś 139, 8

(5) Cf. Kaus 32, 5

(6) AV X 4, 14 ff, the herbs were dug out by the small Kūāta women in the mountains, and were thus N E Himalayan exports, elsewhere (AV IV 9) herbs for school purposes are said to be procured either from the mountains or from the Yamunā valley (clearly the country to the south of the river).

thus Hitherhath come the young physician! (1)—evidently an advanced medical student of the school who uses his acquired skill in favour of the fresher and acts as the school medical officer. The foregoing list of the anxious apprehensions of the teachers and pupil would indicate firstly that the schools were located chiefly in riparian lowlands or submontane regions the premises being *either* surrounded by abundant vegetation *or* very ancient dilapidated and out of or beyond repairs —*or* both. Secondly that the work at school was often so exacting as to produce consumptive students so sedentary as to result in dull livers and that malaria found ready field amongst such materials. It must be said however that Vedic teachers and pupils seem to have been fully aware of these dangers of school life and tried to guard against them. In fact a bookish sapless and unpractical school ideal (as we may find in the medieval schoolmen of the fols) is never commended in any pertinent Atharva vedic context. On the other hand AV VI 38 used in the utsarjana (or dedication) rite performed on entering upon Vedic study (2) shows a paradoxically secular almost materialistic ideal of scholarly excellence the pupil there emulating the excellences (tvāsi lustre) that are of the fierce virile and noble animals that are of the martial wealthy and gambling noblemen.

We have already seen that AV I 1 and I 9 hint at something like an impressive admission ceremony wherein formal speeches were made by teachers and pupils (3). Other passages give further interesting details about this academic function. Thus the following exhortation to adopt the life of a Vedic student is addressed by the teacher to the candidates for initiation (4). Striding away from what is of

(1) AV X 4, 15

(2) Cf K ad. 139 10

(3) Thus I 9 forms part of a teacher's speech and I 1 that of a pupil's

(4) AV VII 105

"men, choosing the words of the gods, turn thou unto (our) 'guidances, together with all thy companions' —Here the teacher takes the student by his arm (or hand), and sets him facing East, with the first half-verse, with the second half-verse he makes the pupil face him (1), apparently each of a large batch of students was thus addressed at one sitting compare the end of the verse, "with all your companions" The formula is quite a suitable one for something like a 'matriculation ceremony', drawing attention to the students' new guides and companions, and it is significant in some other respects —Thus Vedic studentship does not seem to have been the only form of school-life known, it was rather that system wherein 'guidances' were available about 'the words of the gods', or revealed literatures and their appendages, that were chosen in preference to, or to the exclusion of ('striding away from'), knowledge of 'what is of men', or words of men about men (obviously) referring to the Purāṇic lore belonging to secular and Kṣatriyan tradition (2), that is to say, there were then secular educational institutions teaching subjects of human interest,—histories, arts, crafts and sciences,—as well as priestly (brāhmanical) schools that emphasised studies in the divinities,—ritual, law or theology,—and looked down upon the former Epic and Purāṇic evidence, also, would confirm the co-existence of such non-priestly systems of education in the Vedic ages

Even within these priestly Vedic Schools there were important distinguishing features At initiation of a Vedic student and on his introduction to Vedic study, prior to pronouncing the sacred 'gāyatri' and AV IV 1, 1 (and I 1, 1-4), this preparatory 'mantra' is used (3) —"Of 'avyasas' and 'vyasas' do I untie the cleft ('bila') with Magic, by those two having taken up the Veda, we then perform acts (or proceed

(1) Kauś 55, 16.

(2) Also known as 'śruti' (cf. AHT)

(3) Cf. Kauś 139, 10

with the ceremonial) (1) Apparently obscure the passage reveals facts of great importance on close examination Whitney and Lanman have seen in *avyasas* and *vyasas* contractions of *avyacasas* and *vyacasas* meaning 'unexpanded and expanded' by this not very necessary supposition however the sense of the passage does not become any clearer *viśas* has the sense of arranging compiling and editing *viśas* also may very well have that sense accordingly *avyasas* and *vyasas* would mean 'uncompiled or unedited and compiled or edited' respectively The import of the whole passage becomes at once clear untying the cleft ( *bila* ) means bridging the gulf between compiled and uncompiled literature the composite metaphor in that phrase is studiously so the cleavage between the two sets of palm leaf or birch bark (wooden metallic or clay) volumes would outwardly be manifest in the separating string bands (2) —by untying which the opposition between the two classes is as it were obliterated the real reconciliation is achieved through Magic which is another name for the Atharva Veda this suggests that the Atharvanic literature occupied an intermediate position between the selected and classified *Ṛk* *Yajus* and *Saman* literatures on the one hand and the unclassified heterogeneous mass of popular literature on the other a probability accepted by Vedic scholars from many other considerations.—Emblematic of this reconciliation is the procedure of performing the acts (of admission to studentship) the next step is reciting the *gāyatrī* and along with it a mystic utterance of *Veda* —after which come the admission ceremonies proper with AV I 1 4 It is to be noted here that the *gāyatrī* belongs to the *R̥gvedic* collection and is a comparatively late passage originating from the *Kauśikas* of the middle country (who were *Allas*) —while the other passage belongs to the *Atharvanic* lore and is very ancient perhaps pre-*Alla* —if there is

(1) AV XIX. 68

(2) Of the terms *grantha* and *paṭhi* designating such volumes



any basis of fact at all in Purāṇic traditions regarding the place of Veda and Viśvāmitra in ancient chronology. Again, the 'gāyatri' emanates from Nature-worship, and has been an important text of the Kuru-Pāṇchāla or Aila Brāhmaṇism of Madhyadeśa, while the other passage is one of the earliest anticipations of the Upanisadic thought of the Mānva countries of Kośala and Videha in the East — In the phrase " by those two having taken up the Veda ", the sense must therefore be "following the Veda according to both versions ", or "accepting both the classified and the unclassified Veda", 'the Veda' meaning the sacred as well as the traditional literature taken as a whole(1) — Apart from pointing to some controversy in the Vedic Schools as to the sort of literary materials to be used for instruction, or to a recognized classification of these, this 'mantra' may possibly contain an allusion to the famous Vedic compiler, Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vāśiṣṭha, called 'the Vyāsa', 'āvyasas' and 'vyasas' would in this view refer to literary materials unrecognised and recognised by 'the 'Vyāsa's' collections. The 'mantra' would thus show the struggles in the Vedic Schools (after Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana's time, i.e., from the middle of the 10th century B C onwards), between Vyāsīte and non-Vyāsīte curricula. But though this possibility is supported by the likelihood of a passage in the 19th Book of the AV (as this 'mantra' is) of belonging to the last part of the Saṃhitā period, we have yet to recognise that 'vi-as' might refer to earlier attempts at arranging and closing the Vedic canon, and that Purāṇic traditon professes to know something about a number of such compilers before Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana. So on the whole it would perhaps be better to see in this 'admission formula' a reference to ever-recurring differences of opinion regarding the nature and extent of sacred literature to be studied in the priestly schools — The expression, 'having taken up the Veda, we

(1) Traditional lore was also called 'veda', or 'the 5th veda', or 'śruti' and 'śruti' (Of. A1HT),

theo perform the ceremonies was probably in the ceremonial attended with an actual act of taking up some Ms volumes of the Veda from a receptacle or case and placlog them in view or otherwise using them while the admission ceremonies went oo (1) for at the end of the ceremonials for beginning of Vedic study the student utters this formula (2) r Out of what receptacle (or box) we bore up the Veda within that dowe set it down,—that which is studied and acted up to hy the heroic might (i.e. superior powers) of the brahman (or the theology teacher) with that fervour (or intellectual discipline) O gods favour me here (at this school) It seems likely enough from this that each student was supplied or supplied himself with a Ms copy of the voluminous twofold Veda contained in a suitable case oo his admission —the taking out and replacing of which was done with religious care The second part of this *closing* mantra has a fitting relation to the *commencing* one there the student prayed for the powers and spirits of the one-and twenty scholars going about in their academics here he prays for being favoured with the superior intellectual powers and conduct of the teacher himself —he has overcome his diffidence in the course of the elaborate admission ritual—he feels a new importance and sets his goal higher up But as we shall see later on, it is not only the pupil who hopes to be endued with the same tapas (or intellectual effort and powers) as his teacher It was also recognised that the first praise that could be claimed hy the Vedic student was that he filled his teacher with this tapas

In AV III 8 (used in the ceremony for receptioo of the Vedic student and for generation of wisdom ) the student refers to residence with teachers and fellows ( Saip vedyā ) (3) he

(1) We may compare similar uses of the Bible, the Koran, or the Grantha Sahib

(2) AV XIX. 72; of Kam. 139 28.—which gives the much more suitable var loc. of adhitam

(3) AV III 8 1

hopes 'his words may be welcome' to them, and that he may be 'the midmost man ('madhyamesṭhā' arbitrator, leader) among his fellows (1), and he alludes to 'contests for pre-eminence' wherein he will take part,—perhaps 'responsions' or entrance tests (2) The teacher's (or rather the Principal's) speech, in the next three verses, is remarkable in many ways "May ye be just here, may ye not go away (elsewhere, or to another), may an active Warden ('Gopa') and the Master of Resources (or Bursar) drive you hither, do ye, along with these ladies abide by his wishes, let all the gods conduct you together here" (3) "We bend together (educate, train, or shape 'namāmasi') your minds, together your courses ('vratā'), together your designs (motives, or schemes of life), ye who are of discordant courses, we make you bend together here" (4) "I grasp your minds with my mind, come ye after my intent (aims) with your intents, I put your hearts in my control, come with your tracks following my motion (or path 'yātā')"(5) These passages, clearly, record a sample formal speech of a Head Master to a fresh batch of admissions the *first*, referring to exhortations to stick to the School, to abide by the discipline of the Warden and the Bursar, the *second*, to an uniform course of studies, and the *third*, to the personal influence and control of the teacher over his pupils The exhortation to continue in the School is significant, it shows that the not infrequent migrations and secessions in the Schools of the Upanisadic age (6), were a traditional feature of academic life coming down from the

(1) AV III 8, 2

(2) AV. III 8, 3

(3) AV III 8, 4,

(4) AV III 8, 5.

(5) AV III 8, 6.

(6) Vide AISH, ch I re educational buildings These migrations and secessions have a great resemblance to those in medieval and early Renaissance educational centres of Italy, France and England, particularly in the "Student Universities" (as opp to the "Master Universities").

much earlier Vedic age. The reference to the Warden (called *Copa*) and the Master of funds gives a reality to our vague conception of the ancient *kula pati's* *guru kula's* or *śrama's* (1). The mention of ladies abiding by the Warden's wishes along with other male pupils would be incredible *if this were all* of the traces of a forgotten Vedic system of schooling and of co-education for women (2); this particular passage obviously suggests the admission of boys as well as girls at the same time as pupils of one and the same batch or class and under the same control of the Warden and the Bursar conducted together under Providence (all the gods) in the same School. The idea of co-education in any form however was so far removed from or shocking to the mentality of some of the subsequent ages that the text here has given rise to several misreadings and variant readings one of which would give *Do ye along with your desires* (3) *abide by his wishes* — a sense steering clear of the sex difficulty — The concluding portion of the teacher's speech discloses some sort of an educational theory behind it howsoever arrived at he takes education as standardization and uniformity of attainments and ideals of life but it is not on dull mechanical level of thought and action for the whole people that he thinks of his pupils are to be standardized but only by his *own* standard the teacher is the measure of all education which is inspiration under the teacher's influence by his own life thought and will.

Another unfamiliar aspect of Vedic studentship is illustrated by a rite for one commencing study (4) in which the

(1) An *śrama* was certainly never a rude thatched hut with an isolated *śikhra* *śamā*. Much more detail about the nature structure management and activities of the *śramas* may be derived from Epics and Purāṇas; vide infra re Rāmāyaṇa evidence.

(2) Of course unmarried women teachers and scholars of the *Upaniṣad* *śramas*; in the Epics and the Purāṇas occur many references to co-residence of men and women students in *śramas*; vide infra re Rāmāyaṇa evidence; vide also AISH see re status of women.

(3) Reading *kāma* for *kāminī*.

(4) AV VI 401 cf. Kaṇḍ. 139 7.

prosperity of 'this settlement' (1), the School residential area, or 'āśrama-padaṇ' as it is called in the Epics), its safety from the wrath of Kings, and the fearlessness of the new pupil, are prayed for,—and at the same time (1) the teacher invests the pupil with his staff (2) (quite a formidable weapon) Subsequently lost, or destroyed rods, were re-supplied to the Vedic students with suitable ceremonies (3) much as regimental colours are renewed The Vedic Kings were indeed devourers of the estates of noblemen(4), and great sackers of fortified city-states (4), so also the Kings in Epic-Purāṇic tradition referring to the Vedic Age, often prayed upon 'āśramas' (5), much as Henry VIII did on the monasteries of his times It is thus permissible to conclude that this investiture of students with the chastising 'danda' was a sort of 'ceremonial arming' for the defence of monastic rights,—or, alternatively, that the 'danda' ceremony was equivalent to initiation into something like an Ephebate of the village-community or the city-state (6) —Curiously enough, the 'mantras' regulating the ceremonial entry of the King into his fortified city, or his "sleeping house",—(the prototype of Chandragupta Maurya's secret chambers),—include this passage (7) "The 'pur' that has been occupied ('udākramat') by 'brahman' with the Vedic students,—“enter, O King, that stronghold", here it is evident that a group of students under their teacher formed something like a guard of honour for the ceremonial entry, or a body-guard for night-watch at the palace inside the 'pur' or citadel —A

(1) Of Kauś 56, 4

(2) AV VI 48 (with 40).

(3) AV VI 67, cf Kauś 57, 8

(4) Vide AISH, Ch I re Vedic 'baronage'

(5) For Rāmāyaṇic references to such relations between Kings and 'āśramas' vide infra, tyāgā over monastic institutions seems to be the crux of the whole Rāmāyaṇic history.

(6) The township was a military unit, well organised for defence

(7) AV XIX 19, 8

passage in the hymn extolling the Vedic student [the whole of which was probably fittingly recited at his initiation (1)] declares that it is the Vedic student who becomes a *prajāpati* who then rises to rule as a *virāj* and finally becomes a controlling *indra* (2)—these three terms here evidently designating certain state officers in ascending order ( ) another passage in it asserts that it is by virtue of Vedic studentship that the king defends his kingdom (3)—and yet another that by Vedic studentship the horseman (or chevalier knight) strives to earn his bread (4)—These statements could hardly have been made without a basis of an actual practice of recruiting civil and military officials from the Scholars of the Vedic Schools. It is unlikely that mere boys were invested with the staff in the aforesaid manner for fearless defence : the beginning of Vedic study then should here refer to that of a higher course in it the invested pupils being adults or adolescents (5)—so also even as late as the time of the *Cṛtya Sūtras* it is at the initiation of a youth attaining manhood that the *daṇḍa* investiture is held (6). In post Vedic and pre-Buddhist times however the original meaning of this investiture was already lost sight of at least in *Kosala* and *Viśvā* (7) and it was taken to be a ritual arming for driving away evil spirits (8).

(1) Verse 3 of *AV XI 5* is used for it even if *h = 35 18*; the whole piece is equally suitable.

(2) *AV XI 4, 16*. *Virāj* as a title clearly recognised in Vedic literature. In the Epics and the *Purāṇa* *prajāpati* means *virāj* *dharma* *indra* *devarāj* *dharma rāj* etc., so often real titles indicating some sort of ruling or official position though occasionally mythologised by later handling of traditional materials.

(3) *AV XI 5, 17*.

(4) *AV XI 5 18*.

(5) *Vide infra* for further evidence about the post-adolescent or secondary character of courses of Vedic study.

(6) *Śāra* *Grh Sū* 119, 22; *Śukla Gr Sū* II, 6 11, etc.

(7) Where *Ś* i *Drā*, originated. The growth of monarchy in these parts may have a pressed local independence and organizations effectively by the 8th cent B C. the approximate date of *Śat. Brā.*

(8) *Śat Brā III 2 1 72*. The *Viśvā* theocracy may have had something to do with the conversion of monastic arming into a ritual one.

Investiture with the Girdle ('mekhalā') was another important ceremony at initiation of an adolescent or adult student, whose significance lies in a direction different from that of investiture with the Staff. The Girdle was supposed generally to "assign thought, wisdom, fervour or discipline, " and Indra's vigour or kingly strength" (1), but something like an esoteric doctrine of the Girdle is contained in this passage (2) "Since I am Death's pupil, soliciting "from Existence a man for Death, him (3) do I, by incantation, fervour and toil, tie with this Girdle' — This probably implies a formal rite of self-immolation (4) to Yama, the 'offered victim' being marked with the tying of a girdle-string, having its origin in the primitive mysteries of *actual* human sacrifice, this rite seems to have been converted in the Vedic age to a ceremony of self-dedication to sacred study or monastic service — For the self-immolation idea, we might compare the Epic Purāṇic tradition regarding the penances of Rākṣasa individuals, which later on has given rise to stories like 'Rāvanā cutting off his own head as an offering unto 'Brahman' in the course of his Vedic studies. It is remarkable that the ritual explanation of the Girdle should come from an Āgastya 'r-ī', the Agastyas being akin to the Pulastyas (or Rākṣasas) it is clear that this theory of the Girdle originated amongst the pre-Ārya peoples of India (5), before the Vedic Age.





( 20 )

*child's* whole being and entire course of development is now 'found', studied and chalked out, by his spiritual father. The teacher thus reclaims the youths of society from Death and Death consents surely a concept and doctrine calculated to give enormous prestige and inspiration for work to the Vedic teachers.

A review of all these admission ceremonies gives the impression that the admitted were mainly adolescents or adults. Thus students, whom the 'dauda' investiture makes fearless, who delight in sparkling wines and speeches, who desire leadership in debates and societies, who have heard of the "Sage Veda's revelation of the fundamental womb of the 'est' and the 'non-est'", who choose the word of gods in preference to the word of men, who understand the differences between compiled and uncompiled sacred literatures, or are capable of appreciating the nature of the mental powers required for studentship,—cannot very well be regarded as children preparing to learn the rudiments of reading, writing and counting. In fact there are certain quite clear indications that these 'mantras' were originally concerned with more or less advanced students of a secondary stage, who chose to enter into a course of special study in sacred literature, or in other words, chose a Divinity Course in view of ecclesiastical or other similar careers. That seems to be the significance of the approval of the candidate's 'turning away from what is of men to what is of gods,' for another sort of 'guidance' or instruction. So also the candidates for admission are said to have been 'of divergent courses' (of study), 'with different objects', who are on admission 'bent together' by the new teaching,—i.e. they had already passed through other ordinary, secular school courses of various types, before being admitted to a special Vedic course.—Apart from these likelihoods and indications, we have some plain statements about the age of these admissions. Thus the 'mantras' referring to the theory of re-birth at initiation and to preparation for the councils

through studentship(1) address the pupil as this man  
 O man etc (2) Vite for safety and longevity at the  
 beginning of the ceremonies for reception of the Vedic student  
 (3) refers to this man everywhere before admission the  
 pupil is served by a hair-dresser who shaves him clean (like his  
 Buddhist successor in a subsequent age) of his hair beard  
 and moustache(4) the *nivi* and the *paridhāna* the inner  
 and the outer garments (corresponding again to the twofold  
 robes of the Buddhist monks not very long afterwards)  
 that are then consecrated(5) clearly refer to the dress of  
 grown up youths In an initiation formula (6) the pupil  
 says I receive the fire of Agni within me with splendour  
 strength and dominating power and put in me long life  
 and *progeny* (7) at initiation also with ceremonial washing  
 of hands and partaking of a hot meal the pupil prays for  
*progeny* (8) elsewhere again, on reception of a Vedic student  
 his wealth and *progeny* are prayed for (9) Such particulars  
 leave no doubt that the courses of Vedic study were post  
 pubertal

Like the admission to it the dismissal from Vedic study  
 also had its appropriate ceremonial At the completion of  
 his course the pupil received blessings from the teacher for  
 protection of the gods and long life (10) Mystic hymns in  
 praise of the divine *Vac* (*Logos*) were recited to mark the close

(1) AV VIII 1

(2) *Ibid.*, xv 1 4 6 10 18

(3) AV VIII 2; cf. *Kaṇḍ.* 35 3.

(4) AV VIII 17

(5) *Ibid* v 18

(6) Cf. *Kaṇḍ.* 37 21

(7) AV VII 82 2.

(8) AV VII 89, 3 4

(9) AV VII. 33

(10) AV 1 30; Cf. *Kaṇḍ.* 139 15

of the period of her favour to the pupil, as they had been uttered before, when he first used speech(1) He worships the volumes of the Vedas he has finished studying (2),—ceremonially 'sets them down within the book-case out of which he had borne them up' at admission, praying for 'the intellectual and moral fervour whereby his teachers studied and acted'(3),—and praises in due form 'the boon-bestowing (personified) Mother Veda', who, he hopes, 'may repair to and abide with the world of 'brahmans' or 'teachers', 'having assigned unto him fame and the splendour or 'halo' of sacred learning, long life and vitality (breath, spirit), cattle, property and progeny'(2) On his return home, or as he prepared to leave his school for home(4), the impending change of life was solemnly celebrated Hymns were then addressed to the Waters,—apparently during a ceremonial Last Bath(5), or Washing of hands, etc,—for cleansing him of all the hates, untruths and swearings (1) of student-life, and for a perennial supply of the 'vital sap'(6), quite appropriately the departure for home-life was signified by kindling the fire after sunset, and partaking of a hot dinner, with prayers for his splendour, prosperity and progeny(7) His college indeed is interested even in his future wife,—and performs a rite for ensuring conjugal happiness and a prosperous family for him (8), this indicates normal marriage with an adult woman immediately after 'School-leaving' or completion of education, probably even before returning home and it is quite likely that 'savāsin' in a passage (9) of this

(1) AV IV. 31.

(2) AV XIX. 72

(3) AV XIX 71 Kaus 139, 26, uses it at the close of the admission ceremonies, but it is equally applicable to the end of the Vedic course

(4) Kaus 42, 15

(5) Elsewhere in Vedic and Purāṇic literatures, the 'Snātaka' student is quite well known, the term is equivalent to 'Graduate' of modern times

(6) AV VII. 89, 1 3

(7) AV. VII 89, 1 2 4

(8) AV II 29

(9) *Ib: d.*, v 6

mantra for connubial bliss hints at usual eventual unions between youth and maids resident together in the teacher's establishment (1)

Some of these school leaving ceremonies afford diverse points of interest — The praise of the goddess Vac at the beginning and the end of schooling and of the boon giving Mother Veda at school leaving point to the original forms of the well known later school festival of Sarasvatī pūjā. There is no clear evidence in this context of the worship of an idol representing Vac or Mother Veda but the verses in praise of Vac are in the first person and are supposed to be spoken by Vac herself on each occasion. This seems to point to something like a school pageant or mystery play in which a boy or more probably a girl to identify with the teacher's establishment appeared as Vac or Veda matrī (cf. *Avatrī* *Savitrī* or *Sarasvatī*) and delivered the divine message. The identification of the volume of the Vedas with the Veda matrī in these ceremonies is the origin of the goddess Sarasvatī being now represented as carrying a book. The conception of the Scriptures as a mother goddess (2) granting prosperity and progeny (3) is noteworthy as showing clearly that the mother cult was a strong tradition in those early Brahmanical priestly schools — which is an extra Aryan feature — The rite cleansing the departing student of all his hate untruths and swearings discloses a real and human student life with which modern collegians too can sympathise but they can only envy the

(1) Cf. such notion in typical Vedic tradition — *Āsram* and their teachers — *gṛhastha* of *śikṣā* and *Brahmā* (1st of the famous *śikṣā*) — *śikṣā* and *Pramadā* (grandmother of the famous *Kulapati* — *śikṣā*) or the proposed marriage of *śikṣā* and *Devajāni* — all the epistolary writing that the contracting parties were still in residence with teacher. (Cf. *śikṣā* *infra*)

(2) With which we may contrast the *Śikṣā* the *Sādhā* of the collegial *Śikṣā* (lit. *śikṣā* — *śikṣā*).

(3) Fertility rit. also in connection with the Earth goddess, but a place in school ceremonial is not clear.

sweet good sense of those young ladies who, while abiding by the Warden's discipline along with these pugnacious, light-hearted and blasphemous male fellow students, could yet ensure conjugal happiness for them at the end of their strife

Of all the Vedic passages that refer to student-life in general, the fairly long hymn extolling the Vedic student (1) is the most important, and out of its many tersely-worded mystical statements several points of obvious educational interest can certainly be discovered. These are contained in the following passages "The teacher taking the Vedic student in charge ('upa-nī',—initiating him), makes the Vedic student an embryo within, he bears him in his womb (as it were) three nights, the gods gather unto him to see him when born"(2) "The (Vedic) student fills his teacher with 'tapas' (i.e., intellectual effort, discipline and fervour)"(3) "The (Vedic) student sustains the world with his fuel, girdle, toil and fervour"(4) "From him was born the Brāhmana (literature?) the (idea of?) Supreme Brahman, together with (that of?) Immortality"(5) "The teacher is a (Vedic) student, the (Vedic) student (becomes) 'lord of men' ('prajā-pati'), the 'prajā-pati, bears rule (vi-rāj), the 'vi-rāj (ruler, king) became the controlling 'indra'(6) "By (Vedic) studentship, by fervour (or power of intellect), a king defends his kingdom A

(1) AV XI 5, also quoted at the beginning of the chapter on 'brahma cārin', in Gop Brā 1 2, 1-8, cf. besides, Sat Brā XI 3, 3, 1 ff, Taitt Sam VI 3, 10, 5

(2) AV XI 5, 3 —This remarkable academic fiction is probably a relic of those earlier stages of Vedic civilization when women were the secret leaders and the superior parents of society

(3) AV X 5, 1

(4) AV XI 5, 4

(5) AV XI 5, 5 This is important information for the historians of Indian literature and philosophy

(6) AV X 5 16

teacher by (Vedic) studentship seeks a (Vedic) student (१)

By (Vedic) studentship a girl wins a husband by (Vedic) studentship the horse and the draft-ox (i.e. the cavalry soldiers and the agriculturists or the Kṣatriya knights and the Vaiśya farmers) strive to gain food (or earn their livelihood)(२) The (Vedic) student goes forth clothing himself in black antelope skins long-bearded. He goes at once from the Eastern to the Northern Ocean, having grasped (brought under control) the worlds —again and again (constantly) crossing over the seas ( & carikṛat )(३) The (Vedic) student stood performing penance (tapas) with the waters in the back ground by the ocean —bathed brown and ruddy (of locks) he shines much on the earth (४) —It is clear that the dignity of studentship in relation to that of teachership is properly estimated here the teacher no doubt inspires his pupil —but it is recognised that it is equally true perhaps more important that the student fills the teacher with intellectual effort and enthusiasm the teacher himself is no other than a student by virtue of his student character he seeks and attracts other students the teacher is as it were the spiritual parent of the pupil whose initiation and affiliation is a sight for the gods to see —The students are the sustainers of the world With their fuel they sustain *s &* by their devotion

(१) AV XI ५ १७

(२) AV XI ५ १८

(३) AV XI ५ ६

(४) AV XI ५ ३६ —The dress and appearance of the Vedic student here is interesting—his skin is brown perhaps "browned or tanned by the outdoor life and work in the Agrama settlement,—or brown by race; the matted locks of the student's wig are ruddy i.e., tinged with a ruddy dye; the long beard is apparently against tradition, for clean shaving was the general rule in subsequent monastic life, perhaps under Buddhist influence mostly; but the fitness and significance of it will be apparent to any one who studies the recently discovered representation of Pre Aryan god or priest (in the Bhaddi Punjab excavations); Vedic teachers are stated also to have dyed their beards green

to the sacrificial ritual they uphold and strengthen religion and custom in society, with their 'girdle' they sustain it, by their self-dedication and bondage unto the service of the gods, or by their dedicated lives, they uplift the moral tone of the society, or restrain its conduct, with their 'toil' and 'fervour' they sustain for who have explained the scriptures and given unto the world the commentaries on the sacred Vedic texts?—it was the labours of the Vedic students that have produced the great theological literature of the Brāhmanas, the conception of a Supreme Brahman or Oversoul, wherein men seek salvation,—the doctrine of Immortality of the soul, which sustains so many mortals,—have both been derived from the intellectual efforts and inspirations of the students. Without them, verily, the Vedic world, or any world, would have sunk into evil ways, darkness and death—The Vedic students are not only spiritually great, but also temporally. The farmers and knights of the country are successful because they have been Vedic students at first (1), students take not only to agriculture and military service, but also become rulers of men—they become the Elders of the Vedic 'Sabhā' and address the Councils, they rise to be popular leaders or governors, ruling chiefs or kings, and all-controlling High Priests of the Tribe, kings themselves have been Vedic students, and are thus befitted to rule, and rule with the help of the abilities of students. Then again, all teachers are of course Vedic students,—and the Vedic teachers are great and powerful men, the power behind the powers that be. Even the women must be students first

(1) The Vedic students were intimately connected with the agricultural life of the country, in the seasonal fertility rites they were essential, being required to play the part of the Sun god personified in the ritual fertilisation of the Earth wooed by the Sun, the part of the Earth-goddess being apparently played by women Vedic Students in such mysteries or mimetic vegetation dramas, verse 12 of this Hymn about the Student refers to all this. This Vedic popular rite is the basis of the ancient story of Rśyaśṛṅga Kūśyapa being won over from 'celibate studentship' to 'married studentship' for the sake of fertility of the land *vide infra*. re this episode and its other details.

before they can win their men and get married in a society where the men regard studentship as the universal jumping off ground for every career in life —The Vedic student is great in his own country as well as abroad. He crosses over the seas again and again brings the other worlds under his influence and grasp ; and he is to be found in both the Eastern and the Northern Oceans(1) travelling or voyaging from the one to the other —Above all the student engaged in his tapas standing by the ocean of knowledge with the vast cosmic waters in the background bathed (2) brown and with a halo of ruddy matted locks shedding lustre on the common world is an adorable divine sight —comparable only to the quickening sun-god rising against the ocean and shining much on the Earth (3)

Other passages refer to the hum drum or lighter sides of Vedic student life —In a passage about the Vedic student's food(4) used at initiation to accompany an offering by the pupil from the food-stuff obtained by ceremonial begging(5) occurs the following(6) — What food of various form I eat

(1) The Northern Ocean is referred to also in AV VI 2.5; both these allusions are by Atharvanic or Āggrasāyaka. The Eastern Ocean can only be the Bay of Bengal (with the Indian Ocean) but the Northern may be either (1) China Sea (with Pacific Ocean) or (2) Arabian Sea leading into the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea (perhaps also the Mediterranean through ancient canals) or (3) the Caspian and Aral Seas fed by the Jambu (Oxus) river. The 2nd possibility is the strongest considering the nature of Purāṇic traditions and recent Archaeological explorations. In any case the Vedic Schools are stated here to have produced scholars who became missionaries of culture or enterprising traders or empire builders, in the distant parts of the world beyond the Seas; and in these respects they were the models whom the Buddhist monastic institutions followed with such success somewhat later on in history.

(2) This might also mean the graduated dismissed student.

(3) In fact the Vedic student was regarded as a Regent of the Sun on Earth of his place in agricultural rites.

(4) AV VI 71

(5) Cf. Kam. 57.29.

(6) AV VI 71, 1



"in many ways,—gold, horse, cow, goat or sheep,—just what 'soever I have accepted, let Agni make that well-offered'', evidently the alms acceptable to students consisted of money, milk-products and meats, and meats of all sorts from horse-flesh to mutton. It was necessary to guard against their 'minds being excited at offered or unoffered gifts'(1), and their 'wrongfully appropriating the provisions they were not entitled to, or promising to others to supply provisions hypocritically' (2), it shows that the customary ceremonial begging could be avoided by proxy arrangements, and that students sometimes earned more than was necessary, by such licensed mendicancy(3).—Vedic students who thus made free and unwarranted use of the food supplies of their monastery, must naturally have been lazy late-risers, the lenient 'Kula-pati', however, let off such an offender against discipline, found asleep after sunrise (4), with a prayer uttered by his bedside(5). "O Bṛhaspati, Savitar, waken thou him, enlighten him unto great good fortune, however sharpened, sharpen him still further" apparently faith in the student's dormant powers, good-will for him, and forbearance towards his little failings, produced or were expected to produce better results than a stern hostel discipline—Rites had also to be performed for various other mistakes and offences of the student, he often learnt his lessons outside the prescribed times of Vedic study(6), or in unsuitable surroundings (7), in which case his learning of the lesson was regarded as 'lost', and the knowledge had to be 'recovered'

(1) AV VI 71, 2

(2) AV VI 71, 3

(3) A well-known instance of a Vedic student managing to earn more than was needed for him, and being reprimanded for it, is that of Upamanyu, a pupil of the Vedic school of Ayoda-Dhaumya Kāśyapa, chaplain to the Pāṇḍavas of Indraprastha and Hāstīnāpurā 950-900 B C

(4) Kanś. 59, 18, cf. Vait Sūt 5, 9

(5) AV VII 16

(6) Cf Apast Śr Sūt. XV 21, 8

(7) E g., in the midst of a grazing herd of cattle, as is said in AV VII. 66,

with a formal rite calculated to have the indirect psychic effect of concentration and formation of right associations — *Urahmayas* ( explanations of texts by teachers / lecture-notes or probably the volumes of commentaries so designated (1) ) were often lost in a similar way or were actually lost by being mislaid or misappropriated and similar rites were performed in all seriousness for their recovery or replacement (2) which is quite natural for MS copies of these sacred commentaries must have been difficult to obtain or replace easily — Apart from the loss of knowledge and text books other losses and damages suffered or brought about by the students are indicated by rites for recovery of property of sacred hearth fires of soul and of *Indriya* (3) — the first two items probably referring to damages to school property and neglect of fire-places (in the sitting and living rooms) the last two to sins like heresy and to self-indulgence sex-vice or laxity of sex-relations (4) — One way in which soul and property could be lost by the student was by gambling thus is a mantra for success in dice residence in Vedic studentship is presumed to be a reason for divine favour in gambling (5) — The hates untruths and swearings of Vedic student life have already been noted (6) — For absolution from all these wrong-doings within the *Carana* (or Vedic School) its students in a body

(1) As noted before MS vols. if the *Verba* contained in a case were possessed by each admitted Vedic student, its commentaries also must have been similarly included in the student's book-case ( *Kod* )

(2) AV VII 66, also 67

(3) AV VII 67

(4) In 1 cases of which are not rare in the Vedic as well as the Epic-Purāṇic traditions regarding the Vedic school ( *vid* 1 *fra* & AISH ) The chances of such laxity were great in co-educational and co-residential institutions like the Vedic schools

(5) AV VII 109 7 This, as well as another dice-poem AV IV 38 are by *Bādarīyaṇī* who from the appellation must be a descendant of *Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa*, possibly the great gambler *Yudhiṣṭhira* (who was also closely associated with Vedic Schools, acc. to the *Mbh* ) himself

(6) *File* p 22

formally prayed to the Fire-god, in expiation of their mistakes and offences (1)

The Vedic teachers were not above the charms of wealth, even as students they had hymned Savitar so that they might win wealth by Vedic knowledge (2), and at the reception of every Vedic student wealth (and progeny) was prayed for (3). So also as 'adhyāpakas they engaged in formal rites for acquisition of wealth (4) — They were also not above the temptations of the fair sex, there is a considerable amount of evidence in both the Vedic and the Epic-Purāṇic literature of their uncontrolled sex-relations, which reacted on their wives and students (5), to safeguard whose fall were set up many rules of conduct and prohibitions, rather unsuccessfully (6), apparently Vedic society itself tolerated some amount of license (7), though it is likely enough that within the sacrosanct and comparatively secluded monastic pale, where men and women students and teachers were in residence in the same area, together with monks and nuns and virgins or dancing girls dedicated to temple-service (8), the limits of permissible license were wider. From the responsible statement in a funeral 'mantra' (9) that "those who depart unmarried ('agru' — both men and women), but (have been) assiduous, abandoning

(1) AV VII. 106, cf the expressions "Our 'Carana'," "us, companions", in the text

(2) AV. VI. 1, cf. Kaus 42, 11, with comm

(3) AV VII. 33

(4) AV VII 54, with Kaus. 42, 9 10 Vedic teachers referred to in the Upaniṣads are stated to have desired more of pupils and more of wealth and resources, vide AISH.

(5) Vide infra for some examples, and AISH

(6) Thus, e.g., the Vedic law recognised that a qualified pupil of a deceased teacher could lawfully marry his widow, having been her paramour (Āśval Sr Sūta IV 2, 18, with AV XVIII 3, 2, vide also AISH), So also it was expected that a girl sent to be educated to an 'āśrama' and placed in charge of a senior or married teacher might nevertheless end by becoming his mistress (vide infra for Rāmāyaṇic illustrations).

(7) Vide AISH

(8) Vide infra for these details.

(9) AV. XVIII. 2, 47.

hatreds though having no progeny—they going up to heaven have found a place (while they) who marry and beget ( *didhy-na* ) find a place on the back ( *i e* another side) of (the same) heaven it appears that in the brāhmaṇical circles there was no bar in Vedic times to men and women's leading unmarried lives in fact unmarried women teachers are well known in the Vedic Schools and their names have been preserved(1) The presence of such celibates in the āśramas was in itself a latent social danger The frequent struggles between the āśramas and the temporal powers also let loose the worst passions on both sides and thus degenerated social standards thus in a group of passages (2) referring to the Haihaya raids on Bhṛgu āśramas (3) the Haihaya abductors of the teachers wives are cursed but at the same time the wives of all other people are claimed for the brahmins of the monasteries yet in this context the Vedic student is shown in a worthier light it is stated that during these raids the Vedic students went about rendering much service *e g* discovering the āśrama women who were abducted acting in a spirit of chivalry and scouting (4)

We now come to the last group of Atharva vedic passages *vis* those incidentally alluding to facts of educational importance —

Certain Atharvanic love-spells (to be uttered with the use of madhugha either mahūā or ya jhi madhu lycoris)(5) were also used in a ceremony for superiority in theological

(1) *Vide* AISH for details

(2) AV V 17 ff.

(3) Which were a part of their general conquest and occupation of North and Central India : *vide* AIST and AISH ; the times referred to are of 8 centuries before the Bhārata battle, *i e* the 18th cent B. C

(4) AV V 17 5 Of the admonition to newly admitted Vedic students to be fearless against Kings after investiture with the 'daṇḍa

(5) AV J 54, 2-3.

disputations, during the celebration of the 'Aśvamedha' (Horse-Sacrifice) (1), wherein the disputant scholar entered the assembly from the North-East, chewing this sweet, voice-improving herb, so that he might deliver a sweet and winning oration (2) — Another similar charm, for overcoming the adversary in a public dispute (used similarly with a herb, which is put into the mouth, and a wreath of whose leaves, etc., is worn round the head or neck (3), while the debater comes into the assembly from the North-East, called the 'aparājita' or direction of victory (4), has this refrain (5) — "Smite the disputation of my counter disputants (or the arguments of my opposers), "make them sapless ('arasi' i.e. dry and uninteresting, "humourless and pointless speakers)", he wishes that 'his opponent may by no means win the debate', and prays, 'bless us (all) with abilities, (but) make *me* superior in the dispute' (6) The author of these passages was Kapiñjala, who seems to have been a contemporary of Pāṇini-Ārjuna (7), hence public debates had become a characteristic feature of the academic life of the country at least as early as 950 B.C. — Another prayer for success in the assemblies (8) runs thus — "Let both 'Sabhā' and 'Samiti' (Council and Committee) (9), "the 2 daughters (as it were) of the 'Prajā-pati' (the Lord of

(1) Acc. to the comm. The Aśvamedha from the earliest Vedic times was an occasion for theological riddles and debates, and other exhibitions of scholarship, art or special attainments, this was very probably one chief source of the growth of Epic literatures, we shall see presently, how in the Epic, Rāma's 'aśvamedha' was something like an 'educational fair'

(2) Kauś 38, 17

(3) Cf. crowns or chaplets of laurel leaves

(4) Kauś 38 13-21 This points to a tradition of the prominence of N.E. India in Scholarship and disputations

(5) In all seven verses of AV II 27,

(6) AV II 27, 1-7

(7) Vide Pargiter. AISH pp 205, 214

(8) AV VII 12, 1-3, used, with V 3, etc (cf. Kauś' 38. 27), in a ceremony for gaining victory in debates, or in deliberations of political assemblies of the people [Samples of well composed assembly speeches are many in the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa]

(9) Vide AISH re different types of popular assemblies in the Vedic age.

'the people & the king) accordant favour me may those  
 I come together with want to help me (& sincerely  
 co-operate with me or back me up) may I speak what is  
 pleasant among this concourse (& give no offence to any  
 body)(1) We know thy name O Sabha verily Narisjā (the  
 House of Sport) [or var lect Subhadra the House of Noble-  
 men or gentlemen] by name art thou (2) let all thy Sabhā  
 sads (Council members) be of like speech with me (&  
 speak in support of me)(3) I take to myself the splendour  
 the vijñāna (special knowledges and wisdom) of these that sit  
 together O Indra make me the possessor of the fortune of  
 this whole Saṁsad (session of the assembly) (4) —The  
 benediction of the teacher on admission has now been fulfilled  
 and the student coursing by the smooth running chariot of  
 education, has now come into the Councils to sway them

The famous Vedic prayer for Concord (5) probably refers  
 as much to educational institutions ( āśramas ) as to political  
 assemblies of villages or townships ( Sabhas etc ) for the terms  
 used therein *ris* *mantra* *vrata* *cetas* etc (schemes  
 or Ideals of life, courses of study intellection etc ) are specially  
 scholastic Another prayer for concord (6) refers to all the  
 male as well as the female inmates of an establishment along  
 with others dining drinking and worshipping together around  
 the hearth fire like spokes about the nave in the same drink-  
 ing hall ( *prapā* )(7) and as the domestic customs were  
 followed in the āśramas also (where resident students were

(1) v 1

(2) Hinting to the spirit of port and courtesy in which all speeches and  
 disputes were taken here

(3) v 2

(4) v 8.

(5) AV VI 64 = RV X 191 2 31 = Mait. Sam. II 2 6 = Taitt. Brā. II  
 + 4 4-5; for other similar prayers for concord of AV VI 97; III 8; V 23

(6) AV III 30 ap v 6

(7) *Prapā* in the sense of a drinking bar by the roadside (or in an oasis)  
 RV X 4 1; cf also Taitt. Brā. III 10 1 2

attached to their teachers' houses as inmates thereof), the above description would be true of school residential life as well. Women indeed had a share of educational life and knowledge even outside the 'āśramas' thus a cosmogonic and mystic text in the AV (1), about the secret of sustenance of plant as well as animal life being in the atmospheric moisture (2),—which was used in sacrifices wherein the wives also had to participate, or in other women's rites,—begins thus "Now ye people, take knowledge a great mystery (or truth) will now be uttered at this council (or to this assemblage)",—it indicates customary expoundings of the best knowledges of the day at popular gatherings in village or town halls, in which women were also present, or were conspicuous—It is curious that women of Vedic society were interested in plant life and animal life, elsewhere reference is made to Indigo having been first medically used (for leprosy) by 'Asura' women(3), i.e. either women of the priestly family of the Āsuris (4), or women of the Prācya countries (5), and we have already noted that Kīrāta women of the Himālayas sold drugs and herbs to the Vedic 'āśrama' settlements, all this perhaps points to a time when in early Vedic society, as in ancient Greek, all medical functions belonged to the women

(1) AV I. 32

(2) The connection between such mysteries and fertility rituals, with which women were mainly concerned, is apparent

(3) AV I 24, 1 2.

(4) About 10 steps before the Bhārata battle and 3 steps after Hiranya nābha-Kausalya, i.e. cir. 1100 B C, an Āsurāyana Saṃhitā of SV is referred to, the Asuri or Āsura family of Vedic priests was thus old enough, other Āsuris noted in Vedic or Purāṇic tradition are somewhat later (vide AIHT pp 324 ff).

(5) In Sāt Brā, the Prācya mode of funeral architecture is also the 'Asura' mode (vide AISH, re buildings) 'Asura' certainly represented an ancient ethnic and cultural division in Vedic as well as Purāṇic tradition—The 'mantra' following that referring to Indigo refers (AV I 25, 2—3) to another great remedy (for consumptive fevers), called 'Hrūdu' (with numerous variants), usually taken to mean 'gold', thus evidently non Indo European word [ it cannot be a Samskr̥tization of a Gk word, since it occurs

It was not only for success in debates and assemblies that the Vedic r̥ṣis prayed but also for success in trade and agriculture. Indra himself was a trader (1) the trade routes were like roads of the gods between heaven and earth and trade and wealth was for the sake of the gods (2) again the ploughman's work is of the same merit as the poet's for there is creative activity, fertility, measured and symmetrical work in both (3) again some of the Vedic funeral mantras give the same place in heaven to poets (kavi) of a thousand lays (nitha) teachers rich in intellectual powers, warriors fallen in battle, sacrificers and lawgivers (4). The Vedic teachers thus cultivated a sense of dignity of labour and trade arms and law side by side with that of worship, learning and literature.

The tradition of the Vedic schools as recorded in the AV (5) that the Brāhmaṇa (the concepts of) the supreme Brahman and immortality originated with the Vedic student could not have been a late claim formulated in the post Vedic age Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads as we know them now being products of Vedic schools. It would be absurd to suppose that the traditional ceremonial of admission into those schools could include recitations of passages belonging to such subsequent Brāhmaṇa or Upaniṣadic literature. In the aforesaid

in the AV long before the (1) connection, v. d. Journ. A. lat. 9 x. 513 & 1820 ff.] has been well compared with Assyrian *haradu* and Hebrew *harad* or a proto-Semitic *haradu* gold; perhaps *haradu* termite an indigenous spico (vern. *halud*) together with *saradu* and *jarat* (ru. *zari-jari*) in Aryanizations from it. It may indicate that this bit of medical knowledge at any rate was pre-Aryan, coming down from a time when Indians and West Asiatics were of the same stock & culture—to which perhaps the Avara women belonged.

(1) Probably this was an earlier character of this so-called Vedic god; originally Indra was a fertility deity connected with agriculture hence with trade and wealth; the warrior character seems to have been subsequently added on to the pre-Aryan deity by the Aryan conquerors.

(2) AV III 15 (very ancient)

(3) AV III 17 1

(4) AV XIII 2 16 18 (v. 18-RV X 154 5)

(5) XI, 5, 6



Atharva-vedic tradition, therefore, we have a reference to much earlier Brāhmaṇic and Upanisadic speculations, which were the basis of the later systematised and canonised Brāhmaṇas and Upanisads of the post-Bhārata (-post-Vedic) age — Thus the mystic ‘mantra’ uttered by the Vedic student (of the Saṁhitā age) at admission is part of a passage by Vena,— according to Purāṇic tradition a pre-Aṣṭa priest-chieftain of the Lower Gangetic country round about Vṛga (whose son Pṛthu first assumed ‘Kingship’ in India),—and has a distinct Upanisadic flavour “Vena hath revealed, from the well-shining horizon “ 1, 1, the East), the ‘brahman’ that was first born of old (or “in the East), he revealed the fundamental nearest shapes of “it (the ‘brahman’), the womb of the existent and the non-existent ’ (1), verse 7 of the same passage asks “Who “desires to know (the knowledge of) Father Atharvan and “Bṛhaspati (both Āṅgirasas), for becoming creative, poet, god “and self-realised ?”—The next piece in the AV (2) is also by the same Vena, and of similar speculative and philosophical character, with the well-known doubting refrain, “ Kasmai “devāya haviṣā vidhema ” Yet another ‘sūkta’ of Vena is an enquiry after the “highest secret where everything becomes of “one form ” (3) Such enquiry and esoteric knowledge, therefore, would seem to have been part of the pre-Āryan indigenous Indian lore, Atharvanic, Āṅgīrasa and Eastern, dating from about 2200 B C (according to Purāṇic chronology) — Other mystic hymns of the AV also, support this probability In a passage by an ‘Atharvan’, the Supreme Immanent Primal Essence is conceived of as a woman, Virāj, a generatrix (4), and in the next piece by an ‘Atharvācārya’ (5), the same Virāj is a female deity, a milch-cow, or a cow-goddess By this

(1) AV IV 1, 1

(2) AV IV 2

(3) AV II 1, 1 ff

(4) AV VIII, 9, 8-11

(5) AV VIII 10

ācārya of the Atharvāṅgīrasas (1) again priestly lore discipline and literature are figuratively ascribed to milking from the cow deity Virāj (the Supreme Essence) by Brhaspati ṅgīrasa while King Soma (typifying Aśva rule apparently) was the calf just as the art of agriculture was milked from Virāj by Pṛthu Vainya while Manu Vaivasvata (standing for Mānva rulers) was the calf (2) This Vedic legend of a clearly Purāṇic and traditional character seems to point to a development of priestly education amongst the combined Āryo-Drāvidians (Aśva Manvas) when Eastern priestly families like the ṅgīrasas came to influence the Āryan Aśva dynasties of the Midlands (3) —Regarding the nature of Brahman conceived of as the mystic Skambha two other hymns in the AV (extracts from which are included in the Rgveda as well) record thoughts which are fully the precursors of the Upaniṣadic speculations about the nature of ātman and not much difference in time seems possible —but one of them (4) is by Kutsa ṅgīrasa (a Rgvedic ṛṣi as well) who according to Epic Purāṇic tradition was made son in law by the Ikṣvāku King Bhagiratha (at the 45th step after Manu cir 1600 B C) and the other (5) is by Atharvan the Younger (Kaudra) the same as either Atharvanidhi Āpava Vāsiṣṭha priest to Bāhu and Sagara (at the 40th step from Manu cir 1670 B C) or an other Atharvanidhi Vāsiṣṭha priest and instructor to Dīlīpa II of the same dynasty (at the 60th step cir 1400 B C) (6) both hymns were thus ancient Mānva sud Eastern in origin All this supports the Atharva vedic claim and the implication of the ceremonies of admission to Vedic studentship that

(1) AV VIII 10 Parvāya 4 and 5 vv 24 25

(2) That is to say the earlier and larger share of theological and literary productions was of the ṅgīrasas the later and smaller share (like that of the calf) was of the Aśvas, —just as the Pṛthuvites had the main share of agricultural wealth, the residuum belonging to the Mānvas.

(3) Vide AHT for historical traditions on this point.

(4) AV X, 8

(5) AV X, 7

(6) Vide AHT vv Vāsiṣṭhas.

cosmogonic, mystic or metaphysical speculations were in origin traditional, ancient and indigenous, being the special knowledge of the Atharvāṅgīrasas of Eastern India, and were growing by contributions from the theological students of the Saṁhitā age itself, being thus rather pre-Vedic and Vedic, than post-Vedic

Some of these mystic Atharva-vedic passages give a remarkable view of the nature and worth of man, which must have had its effects upon contemporary education—In one such passage (1), after a description of human anatomy (2), wonder is expressed and questionings raised about the mental states (3), and about man's spiritual nature and characteristics (4) — “Numerous loves and hates, sleep (and dreams), oppressions “and wearinesses, delights and pleasures,—from where does “formidable man bring them ?” (9) “Whence comes in man “mishap, ruin, perdition,—accomplishment, success, non- “failure ? whence (comes in him) thoughts and inspirations “(lit uprisings, ‘ūḍiti’)?” (10)—“Who set in man progressive- “ness (or drive, ‘gātu’), who love of display (‘ketu’), who “the behaviours (‘cāritra ) in man?” (12)—“Who set in him the “(concept of) Truth, who (of) Untruth ? who (of) Death, who “(of) Immortality ?” (14)—“Who favoured him with strength, “who developed his swiftness ?” (15)—“Who put the seed in “him saying ‘let his line be extended’ ? who conveyed wisdom “into him ? who endowed him with music, who with the rhythm “of dances ?” (17)—“With what (urge) does man cover this “earth, surround the sky, surpass the mountains in great- “ness ?” (18)—“With what (quest) does man go after rituals

(1) AV X, 2, by one ‘Nārāyana’, either a descendant of the Kṣatriyan brāhman family of Nara, a pseudo Bhārata but really a Bhāradvāja-Āṅgīrasa, at about step no 2, or cir 1520 B C.,—or perhaps Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva Nārāyana, desc of Nala or Nara the Yāgyav, cir 975 B C.

(2) *Ibid.*, vv 1-8, verse 5 wonders “who brought together his two arms, saying ‘he must perform deeds of heroism’ ?”

(3) *Ibid* , vv 9 10

(4) *Ibid* , parts of vv 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 31-33

and faith? Who put (this) mind (mentality) in him? (19) — Wherewith does man attain to knowledge of revelation (śrotīya)? (20) — Whereby is man's strength (power (bāhira) real (good sat)? (22) (1) — The human body is finally described as a stronghold wherein a spirit the brahman resides enclosed in a luminous golden cell (31 33) — In another mystic passage discussing the constitution of the universe and of man (2) the anatomy of man is described (3) all the parts being designed by the gods having brought together (the elements of) the mortal the gods entered man having made the mortal a dwelling house the gods entered into man (and therein) having made his vital fluid the sacrificial oblation, the gods entered man all other bad things all that is evil in man — specified in full detail — and also some good things — entered the body afterward (4) knowing the puruṣa is therefore knowing brahman for all deities are seated in man as cows in a cowstall (5) — We have here a philosophic doctrine that man is originally divine and good and all his physical and mental aspects are wonderful and sacred. The following substance of this passage (6) — together with the preceding extracts from the other passage — would show to what extent (scientifically) and in what light (philosophically) man was studied by the ancient Vedic teachers — When he brought hair bone sinew flesh marrow — when he made a standing body — what

(1) The answer to all these questions is given in the next verses all these features, forces, tendencies instincts powers, faculties or reasons in man constitute brahman

(2) AV XI 8 — by one 'kuru pathi' who from the appellation must have belonged to Kuru-patha (cf Kuru jādyala and Dakṣiṇīpetha) or the Kuru country and to the go when the Kurus (following the Pāṇḍavas) had come under Vāṅmāra and other brahmanical influences from the Eastern countries c. cir 1800—900 B C

(3) Ibid. v 11ff

(4) AV XI, 8 19—28

(5) Ibid. v 32

(6) Ibid. vv 11—34.

“world did he afterward enter?” “Whence brought he the hair, sinews, bones, limbs, joints, marrow, flesh,—who brought from whence?”—“Embroiderers (‘sain-sic’) forsooth are those ‘gods who brought together these materials, having embroidered (fabricated, designed) the whole mortal, the gods entered man” “Thighs, feet, knee-joints, head (or hips), hands, face, ribs, nipples, sides what seer put them together?” “Head, hands, face, tongue, neck, vertebræ,—all that enveloping with skin, the great joiner (mechanic) put together” “This great body which lay there, put together by the joiner,—who brought into it the colour (light, life) with which it shines here to-day?” “All the gods assisted but She who was a Woman knew, She who was spouse of ‘Viśva’ (Universe) and mistress (‘Īsā’) (1), brought (this) colour into it” “When the divine architect (‘Tvastṛ’) bored (the ‘sense-openings) through him,.. having made the mortal a house, the gods entered into man”—“Sleep, weariness, misery, evils, senescence, boldness, hoariness,—entered the body afterward” “Theft, ill-doing, wrongs, truth, sacrifice, great glory, both strength and dominion, and force,—entered the body afterward” “Both growth and waste, generousities and niggardlinesses, both hungerings and all thirstings,—entered the body afterward” “Both revilings and praises, both welcomes and repulsions, faith and benefactions and unbelief,—entered the body afterward” “Both knowledges and ignorances, and what else (2) is to be taught, the

(1) This is clearly an earlier statement of the Sāṃkhya doctrine of ‘Puruṣa’ and ‘Prakṛti’ (‘Viśva Prakṛti’), and of the notion of a Primal Generatrix, a Mother Goddess or ‘Īakti’ (‘Īsā’), in fact this cult was pre-Āryan

(2) This “what else” is apparently—the chants (Sāman), charms (Atharvāṅgiras), formulæ (Yajus) and verses (Rk), named immediately after, these, then, were regarded as neither ‘knowledge’ nor ‘ignorance’, and as later products of man a remarkably bold and rationalistic ‘Vedic’ estimate of the worth of the Vedic revealed literature, consisting of all the four Vedas. It is clear from this that post-Vedic rationalism and free thought had a much earlier history

charms the verses the chants and the formulæ —entered the body (afterward) Delights joys enjoyments and they that enjoy enjoyments (i.e. the organs for experiencing those enjoyments etc.) —laughter sport dances —entered the body afterward Both speech and pratings and they who (i.e. the agencies or mechanisms which) utter addresses (or simply utterances) —all entered the body (afterward) —as well as the adjuncts (the paraphernalia of life) ( *Ayojanāni* ) the needs ( *prayojanāni* ) and the (worldly) ties ( *yojanāni* ) —Inhalation and exhalation Indestructibility and destruction —sight hearing speech and mind —accompanied the body Both blessings and precepts regulations and explanations thoughts and all desirings —entered the body afterward (1) Having made the bones their fuel and the vital fluid their sacrificial oblation (2) the gods entered man ' Brahman entered the body on the body is *Prajā pati* (the Lord of Beings the Creator) The Sun and the Wind shared the eyes and the breath of man then his other (i.e. finer) self the gods bestowed on Fire By the first (self) dying it goes apart (splits up) dividing threefold yonder goes it with one part yonder with another here with one part it dwells (remains) (3) Within

(1) Here the text proceeds to allocate the various fluids and secretions in the human body

(2) The phenomenon of human life and race being regarded as a sacred act of the gods life is an altar-fire lit and fed by the body which is consumed; and this fire of life is satisfied and propitiated by the offering of the germ-plasm, by the continuity and renewal of the life through it.—The Vedic teachers had thus conceived of something like a 'biological religion'

(3) That is the other self bestowed on the Fire-god is immortal, being Fire or Energy itself, so it is the first self which dies; there again dying means re-union with the Sun with one part with the Wind with another while only the third part of the first self is left on the earth as dead body even this dead body harbours a mighty spirit and is not really lifeless and dead or inorganic.

“waters that are sluggish and ancient, is this body placed (1) ,  
 “(even) within that is mighty spirit (‘śava’) thence it is  
 “called ‘śava’ ” —“ Therefore, indeed, one who knows mar  
 “(‘purusa’) thinks ‘this is Brahman’ for all deities are seated  
 “in him as cows in a cowstall ”

(1) This is evidently a reference to a practice of consigning dead bodies unto the R. Ganga, the *Lower* Ganges is meant, and the practice was clearly ancient even then —The reference is ethnically and historically very significant

## PART II

### RĀMĀYANIC SOURCES

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**T**he Rāmāyanam is generally considered to be a late post-Buddhistic production very often re-written and added to and therefore unreliable for historical purposes. This impression has been due to its study by scholars from several points of view mainly linguistic and literary and partly historical and ethnological but its fairly copious information about the many aspects of social history have not yet been systematically classified and examined. It is conceivable therefore that such examination will reveal social conditions which do not fit in with a late post-Buddhistic epoch and may after all refer to a much earlier Vedic tradition—of the times that the Epic speaks of and not altogether of the times in which it may have been remodelled later on in form language and certain other respects—I have here taken up the aspect of Education in this Epic for detailed study and I find that accepted notions about Rāmāyāṇic social conditions have to be given up—just as I had to discard certain current views on Vedic and Epic civilizations and Purāṇic traditions while studying several *other* aspects of ancient social history.

A Rāmāyāṇa would naturally be very particular about the character attainments and education of Rama—and taken together with what is said about those of other personages in the Epic (contemporary or alluded to) this forms an obvious subject of enquiry.

Vālmiki (whose proper name was Bṛhaka and clan-name Bhūrgava) having invented the Anuṣṭubh metre wanted to compose a great Epic in it and was looking for a suitable



subject,—a great contemporary Accordingly, passing by the many ancient heroes of tradition, he enquired of Nārada,—a ṛṣi who had come to see him about his new metre,—if he knew of a modern hero “Who at present amongst us is such and such” —and he proceeds to outline an ideal (1) Here what Vālmiki would like to see in his hero may be briefly described as a harmonious development and combination of the excellencies of body, mind and character A number of opposites should co-exist in him accomplishments and prowess, religiosity and action (or action and learning,—if ‘karma’ and ‘sruta’ are taken as better readings than ‘dharma’ and ‘kṛta’), learning as well as an able body,—somewhat like the combination of word and deed in Homer’s Achilles, amongst the elements of moral character also, in Vālmiki’s ideal, there are certain opposites firmness of resolve with ever-pleasing aspect, geniality and unmaliciousness with fearful fury in battle —Nārada thinks Rāma comes up to this ideal, and suggests him as a fit subject for the Epic, describing him in detail at the same time (2) An analysis of this sketch discloses the same conception of harmonious blending in an ideal man —*Physically*, he has large eyes, graceful brow, and other traditionally auspicious bodily marks, he is bright and clear-complexioned, he has a shapely neck (like couch-shell), and a graceful poise of the head, he is of powerful build, symmetrical limbs and medium height, he has broad shoulders, with shoulder-blades hidden within muscles, muscular chest, mighty arms reaching down to knees, and a graceful gait, massive jaws and face like the moon particulars, which, by the way, show a somewhat non-Āryan physical model, and he is of great prowess, foc-killing and wielding the bow mightily —*Mentally*, the hero

(1) Rām I, 1, 24

(2) Rām I, 1, 8-19 At the time of this suggestion Rāma must have been the reigning sovereign on return from exile, he was then 43 or over, it is quite possible that it was the renunciation of Sitā (who now came to live in retirement in Vālmiki’s āśrama) that had stirred the emotions of the

is endowed with good memory and intelligence and power of concentration he is acquisitive and deep he is trained in the science of Ethics or Politics and well practised in the military science he is versed in the lore of the Vedas and their Ahgas (which means Theology Ritual Astronomy Orthoepey Prosody Music Grammar Philology and Etymology all centering on the Sacred Texts)—and aware of the meaning and purport of all scriptures and sciences and he is eloquent—*Morally* he is ever genial loveable and engaged in welfare of men abiding by his own appropriate social duties and supporting his own kinsmen—the joy of his mother honest honourable and true to his word obedient yet proud in spirit pure and discerning seeking renown and attracting round him all good men patient equanimous master of his senses and self controlled in gravity like the Sea in firmness like the Him layas in patience like the Earth and in indignation like destructive fire Apart from these as king he is gracious paternal bounteous truthful and just to his subjects—*Martial* strength muscular build grace symmetry and enrythm military and political training literary philosophical and scientific knowledge and rhetorical powers ambition and spirit discipline and tenacity public benefaction and influence—practically all that we usually associate with Athenian education of the 5th century B C—are included here There are however certain marked differences between this Vālmikian and the Hellenic ideals thus the latter does not provide for scriptural and theosophic knowledge or for so extensive and minute a study of language and the conceptions of virtue lying in serenity attained by self-control or in working out the predetermined conditions of each individual life are quite foreign to it

great poet; in that case this description of the contemporary Rāma would refer to his 44th year; a part of the epic seems to have been composed by the end of that year when Lava and Kusa were born for it was chanted then; the greater part of it was ready for recital 12 years later when Satrugṇa heard it t Vālmikī's *Aframa* route from Mathurā to Ayodhyā

The educational attainments of Rama and his three half brothers at the age of 16, or in their 16th year ('āna-sodaśa')(1),—when they were regarded as having come of age ('asaṁsaktaḥ')(2) and become eligible for marriage,—is thus described(3) Versed in the Vedas, and still engaged in Vaidika studies, possessed of wide knowledge, well grounded in the science of arms, hunting on horse-back with bows and arrows, expert in riding elephants, horses and war-chariots, spirited, heroic, already famous, and looking far ahead, of all virtues, humble, ministering unto their father, and intent on welfare of others—Here too there is a fair balance and aptness in the education imparted literary studies continue, though information is already wide, martial exercises, tackling powerful animals, riding, driving, archery and hunting excursions supply the special needs of adolescence, and on the moral side some of these needs are met by the chastening discipline of filial piety, humility and social service, that sets off a juvenile spirit and ambition of doing, daring and dazzling

At this stage Rāma was placed in charge of a 'Viśvā-mitra' or Kauśika ṛṣi (from what is now the Shahabad and Mirzapur districts), to assist him in preventing ravages on his 'āśrama' by the hostile rulers of the land,—and he now received further instruction (4) This was in what was shortly or technically called 'Valū' and 'Ati-valū' 'vidyās' (i e, the sciences of Power, Natural and Super-natural, or of material and spiritual powers), as 'Viśvāmitra' taught them, Rāma (having undergone a preparatory ceremonial) read ('path') the 'vidyās' with him, and studied them ('adhī ī'), From the context it appears that one of these two collections ('grāmas') of Vedic hymns ('mantras') was of charms and

(1) Rām I, 20 2

(2) Rām I, 19, 17

(3) Rām I, 18

(4) Rām I, 22, 13 ff.

Incantations of an Atharva vedic nature to ensure glories, success and strength in battle and the other was of mystic hymns of Upanisadic and Atharva vedic character again which were calculated to give Rāma philosophic knowledge subtle apprehension and capacity for controversies ( jñāne buddhi nīcaye nttare prativāktavye ) It is quite likely that what Rāma really learnt here was the Atharva veda itself in its traditional two parts philosophical and magical as it was known in his days (i.e. about 1400 B.C. according to Iurinic evidence) — Rāma was also now given an additional training in arms by the Kauṭika ṛi to the possession of the Kauṭikas It is said(1) had passed on certain types of weapons and the art of using them from Kṛṣṇa and Dakṣa's daughters (which perhaps means that this military knowledge had been learnt from the earlier Ikṣvāku and pre-Mānva Dakṣa ites by their supercessors in the Upper Middle Gangetic region the Aila Kauṭikas) of this ancient heritage 55 different weapons (like burning coals smoke or heaven's orbs — and which had also previously been used by the Kauṭikas in their feuds with the Vāsiṣṭhas) (2) and their applications were taught by Viśvāmītra to Rāma together with the knowledge of destroying or counteracting them to the accompaniment of charms — 51 different mantras called saṃhārah also derived from the aforesaid Kṛṣṇa(3) — This supplementary (literary as well as martial) education and subsequent employment in punitive expeditions on state service do not seem to have taken more than a year by this time Rāma was close upon 17 and he now woo Sītā as his bride on the results of a martial test — But his education is continued for long after this

Rāma was to have been formally installed as the Crown Prince or Heir Apparent at an age between 28

(1) Rām. I. 21, 27, 28

(2) Rām. I. 56

(3) Rām. I. 27, 28

and 30 (1) His educational attainments and other qualifications at that time were then thus recounted (2), as being sufficient justification for the old King's choice and popular approval —

*Intellectually* He has fine memory and talents His speech is not rude, for he has learnt the art of sweet, pleasant conversation and of leading it, and knows how to prelude his speeches with amiable phrases He is (still) trained (educated 'abhi-vinītaḥ') by initiated ('dvija') elders cognizant of Law and Custom ('dharma') and Polity ('artha'), he attends and listens to deeply and variously learned ('śruta') elders, and he discourses regularly with persons venerable for wisdom, in the intervals of his martial exercises He is now able to discourse in chains of arguments or in reasonings in chain ('uttarōttara-yuktīnām vaktā') like a 'Vācaspati' (a Master or Professor of Logic, or the head of a Vedic School) (3) He is learned he knows the Scriptures as well as Rituals ('śruta' and 'kṛta'), 'he is well-versed in the customs of the community or society, he knows the principles of income and expenditure as 'seen' (i e., read, laid down or explained) (in

(1) Sītā had lived with Rāma at Ayodhvā for 12 years (samā) after her marriage, and on the 13th year they were exiled (Rām II 47, 45), Rāma married in his 17th year or at 17 (being not yet 16 when he left his father for adventures under guidance of the Kausika ṛṣi), so at the time of his proposed installation and subsequent banishment Rāma was 29, at any rate between 28 and 30 This is confirmed by Rāma's mother Kausalyā's statement (Rām II, 20, 45) that for 17 years from the 'jāta' of Rāma, she had continually prayed for the end of her sorrows (through her son), here 'jāta', may be taken either in its evident sense of birth (or conception), or, after commentators, in the sense of initiation (or second birth),—which must have taken place at 12 according to Kṣatriya custom, in the first alternative, the sense would be that Kausalyā anxiously awaited the coming of age ('a-samsakti'), finishing one stage of education and going through the 'ephebie' test after it, and the marriage of her son, between 16 and 17, in the 2nd alternative, the reference is to the 17 years of waiting between the initiation of Rāmā at 12 and his nomination for the throne at 29

(2) Rām. II, 1 and 2, in two separate sketches of the same type. The grouping here is mine, the words and phrases are close translations

(3) Cf 'Vācas-pati' in the Av. admission ceremonies, vide ante.

treatises) (1) he knows the ways of apportioning ( *śreṣṭhā* ) using and investing) money (2) he knows the principles of Law ( *dharma* ) as well as of Erotics ( *śāstra* ) he has attained proficiency in all sciences ( *śāstras* ) also in all mixed dialects ( *vyākṛāṇas* ) (3) he knows the recreative or pleasurable arts ( *vaiharī* ) ( *śāstra* ) (4) and has become proficient in Gandharva or Music (5) He is forgetful of and unwavering in the knowledge he has acquired ( *śreṣṭhā* ) uses and believes in what he knows) he continues to be interested in groups or associations of students ( *śāstra-gaṇas* ) (6) and is anxious that (as in his own time) they should with their armours well fastened ( *varma-sudāṇitah* ) regularly attend the lectures or instructions of their teachers abiding by their guidance ( *śāstra-sante* ) (7)

*Physically:* He is now in the fulness of youth (at 30) fully developed in body free from disease, and endued with

(1) Been clearly indicates written work which were read. Probably also, the implication of *mantra-draṣṭā* is that Vedic text were invariably visualised by being written down in hieroglyphs.

(2) *Artha-vibhāga-vit* which might also mean knowing the various head of expenditure something like a budget knowing the divisions of economics and political science. I also a likely meaning but *Artha* is mentioned elsewhere in this account in this latter sense.

(3) *Vyākṛāṇas* is usually taken to mean a literary work ( *śāstra* ) a drama) in Sanskrit mixed with Prakṛite; it is doubtful if this sense is applicable to the Rāmāyaṇa conditions.

(4) *Vihāra* here may refer as much to social pleasures as to games and pastime; so that the *śāstras* referred to would be various with dancing and theatricals on one side of the scale and sport on the other. But it is equally likely that *vihāra* might refer to monasteries of those times, in which case the reference would be to arts flourishing or originating in the *vihāras*.

(5) The Vedic *gandharva* corresponds in many ways to the Hellenic Muse; and *gāndharva* can be best rendered by Music in the ancient sense.

(6) The *gaṇa* grouping or association is pre-Buddhist, and was early extended to a number of social and economic activities of the people. *Gaṇeśa* the learned god of success may have originated from the rituals of Vedic *śāstra-gaṇas*.

(7) *Tb va loc. dharma-sudāṇitah* is pointless.

strength as well as grace. He now excels his father in the use of weapons, he is engaged in regular military practice (with intervals devoted to letters), he is an expert in leading and disciplining armies, accomplished in the science of archery (or military science), skilled in riding and training horses and elephants, and publicly counted as a first-class chariot warrior ('atiratha'). Going to war, on chariot or elephant, for the sake of a village or town, he would never return from the field of battle without winning, he went on or led military expeditions ('abhiyātā'), and struck enemies by his raids ('prahartā'), he was in fact unconquerable in battle.

*Morally.* He has developed inclinations proper to his noble family,—regarding the 'Kṣātra' (or knightly) duties as the highest and leading to highest heaven. He is not addicted to undesirable things, does not relish improper talk, knows propriety and fitness in time and place, is polished ('ślaksna') and always of good deportment ('bhavya'). He honours age, and is firm in reverence, and he discourses with persons venerable for age and character.—He is unmalicious, unspiteful and unenvious. He is of anger subdued, unirritable and forgiving, enduring like the Earth, not retorting even if harshly addressed, and gratified with a single benefit while forgetting even a hundred injuries. With no anger or malice he is yet incapable of being disregarded by any one, he is mild yet firm-willed, powerful, yet not vain of his own great prowess. He is sympathetic,—consoling (the bereaved), commiserating with the destitute, sorrowing with the calamities of the people and rejoicing in their festivities. He is truthful and straightforward, the standard as it were of honesty, he never takes dishonestly (or never takes a crooked view or looks to the bad side of things), and he is whole-heartedly established in virtue. He is aware of his own shortcomings as well as of others, speaks true yet fair of all, and is not a slave of the times. He is spirited and heroic, not lethargic, not heedless, and resourceful.—He is of steady and calm soul, serene and sober ('nibhṛta'), his feelings are unexposed, he is never glad or

angry for little things or for nothing he knew the proper time for enjoying as well as for renouncing things he can grasp (work for) (both the high goods of) virtue and profit at the same time and he follows pleasures without being idle or self-indulgent

*As Prince* he had inherited the dynastic inclinations and traits—and regarded the work of a Katriya as of highest merit convinced that this alone would lead him to heaven. He was patient and heroic like the Earth and Indra and Virtue and Prosperity as it were issued from and were established by him. He was a chastiser of offenders never angry or pleased without any effect on the people he was able to sound the intentions of men but was of close counsel (undivulged secrets) himself. He could discern justly between occasions for chastisement and favour knew the proper occasion (opportunity or place) for gathering (round himself) (i.e. recognising) and favouring good men—and also that for punishing evil-doers. He knew of various means in the affairs of income (i.e. was resourceful in increasing revenue) and also knew the manners of expenditure as seen in treatises. He was approved by and agreeable unto the citizens (samata) pleasing to them like the Moon he was the source (inspirer) of all beneficent (philanthropic) acts (in the country) he enquired after the welfare of citizens (pauran)—about their sons wives and servants about their ceremonials and groups of pupils (śiṣya-gaṇas) he also enquired of courtiers and brāhmanas about their pupils attending their instruction in full military dress. He sorrowed with his people in their calamities and rejoiced in their festivals.

A comparison of this sketch with that for the age of 17 above would show that in about 1 year's time the education of the Epic hero has advanced appreciably both in intensity of lines already taken up and in extent of contents subsequently added—Thus for intellectual attainments at 17 we have Vedic studies going on Introduction to Atharvavedic mystic



lore and philosophy (to qualify for controversies), and wide information, while for those at 29 we have apart from continued Vedic studies, those in Law and Polity under experts, knowledge of rituals and customs, of mixed languages or literatures of complex varieties, the art of polite speaking or Rhetoric, discourses with Wise men, dialectics and Logic, principles of economics and accountancy or arithmetic, recreative and pleasurable or 'fine' arts (by way of social accomplishments) Music (vocal and instrumental) and dancing, and Erotics. It will be noticed that this post-adolescent education is mainly literary, rhetorical, philosophical, artistic and sociological, with a bit of economic mathematics, there is nothing of natural science and higher mathematics in it. The importance of fine speech, sophistic discourse and art in the scheme affords a Hellenic parallel, while it is a characteristically Indian one, while Erotics (with Eugenics) is a subject which has probably nowhere else than in India found so early and general recognition in education—As regards physical and martial exercises,—instruction in the military science (archery etc,) continues after 17, so also does riding and managing war animals and coveyances, the special training given at 17 through a testing punitive expedition develops into continued martial practice through periodical campaigns and raids, all through these 12 years there is a regular scheme of soldierly exercises (with intervals otherwise utilised), the result being a fully developed physique, strong yet graceful, another advance being acquisition of the status of a 'first class' warrior—In moral culture the advance is very conspicuous while the adolescent of 17 is characterised only by sprightliness and ambition tempered with training in obedience and service, the adult of 29 shows much complexity of and many excellences in his character. He has developed a knightly consciousness, and is polished and educated in manners, he can combine opposites in his moral constitution, *e.g.* mildness with strength, virtue with interest, pursuit of pleasures with vigour, he can control his instincts and impulses, his controlled self is

dissociated from his activities he is in the world but yet aloof from it he can analyse defects and merits in himself and is independent in views being no slave of the times and he is philanthropic,—serving sympathising with interested in society and encouraging the good things in it It is a remarkable character combining the polish and heroic devotion of mediæval chivalry the meek and tender Christian service and the masterly self control and serene spirituality of the Indian yogi

It appears from certain particulars in the Epic that even after 29 Rāma would probably have yet continued in his several courses of study and training If he had not at that age been nominated Crown Prince and then exiled immediately afterwards—Thus it was a matter for concern to his father that emaciated as he was by (studies in) the Vedas by *scriptural* courses of studentship and by (apprenticeship to) many masters or teachers [or by the burden of Vedic studies and several courses of academic discipline: *vedaish ca brahma caryaiś ca gurubhiś cōpakar-itah* ] Rāma was now again to undergo a life of great toil and hardship (*vir* forest exile) at this proper (or well-earned) time for enjoyments (1) he was evidently still fully engaged as a student whose toils were to cease on installation as Prince Two sets of armour and weapons (bows quivers full of arrows gold burnished swords and coats of mail) were presented to Rāma and Lakṣmana at their wedding and subsequently deposited at the sitting house or school (*sadman* as opposed to *nivēdana* (2) or quarters proper) of their Ecārya the instructor of the Ikṣākus (in arms) these were taken out again from his custody when they set out for exile (3) Rāma and Lakṣmana were thus at 29 still taking their regular military exercises (referred to elsewhere (4) as well) with their paidotribe But by the ordinary standard Rāma seems to have

(1) Rām II 12 84

(2) Rām. II 32

(3) Rām II 31 20-33.

(4) Rām II 1 and 2

been regarded as just having finished his education, for after he had left the kingdom, many expressed the opinion that he could hardly be kept out of the throne by Bharata for long, particularly as he had gone through the life of a Vedic student and completed his courses of study ('carita-brahma-caryasya vidyā-snātasya dhīmatāh') (1) In any case Rāma was still in very close touch with his schools and teachers,—if he was not actually being taught by them. Thus on the eve of their departure, Lakṣmana calls on and invites on Rāma's behalf, Suyajña Vāśiṣṭha, son of one of their preceptors, and a class-friend,—and Rāma makes a present of all his and his wife's best belongings to this 'junior teacher' and his wife, she too being a friend (2) Other teachers also were honoured with parting gifts *e g*, an Āgastya and a Kauśika (perhaps the same as the Kauśika who taught him the Atharvavedic mysteries), a Vedic 'ācārya' (professor) of the Taittirīya school, named Abhirūpa, and the venerable ('ārya') 'Sūta (Paurāṇic teacher, chronicler and court-poet), named Citraratha, a 'Saciya (councillor) long resident at court (3) The many Readers of the Kāthaka schools, and the duly investitured students of the Mānava schools ('Kathakālāpāh danda (1 ?)-Mānavāh'),—ever engaged in private studies ('svādhyāya'), doing nothing else (*i e*, not earning), nevertheless esteemed by great men,—were recipients of Rāma's special favour, so were the members of the Great Council or General Association ('Mahā-Sangha') of initiated students (*iut* 'girdled ones',—Mekhalīnām') who approached him at that time (4) —Shortly afterwards, when Bharata followed Rāma to Citrakūṭa to induce him to return, Rāma, in the course of his parting instructions to his half-brother, urged him to be respectful towards the Upādhyāya Sudhanvan, one of the teachers of the Princes, expert in all sorts of arms and accomplished in the science of

(1) Rām II 82

(2) Rām II 32

(3) Rām II 32

(4) Rām, II 32

Polity ( artha śāstra ) (1) and he warned Bharata against the company and influence of Lokāyatika brāhmaṇas (1) teachers or scholars of popular or Sensational schools of Philosophy — who were proud of their learning yet childish (or mostly youngsters or were mere novices vāṇīh) who preached meaningless vanities having acquired acumen for dialectics ( Ānvikṣiki huddhi ) ignoring the main treatises on Virtuous Custom ( dharma śāstra s) —and thus ever brought on troubles (2) Such particulars would indicate that just before his exile Rāma was specially interested in Philosophy Rītnai Polity and History —Atharva veda Yajur veda Artha śāstra and Purāṇic heroic chronicles —in the characteristic products and thoughts of the Taittirīya Kāṇhaka Mānava Āṅgīrasa Kauṣika Sūta and Lokāyatika schools —and that the last things that had engaged his attention were details of administration (3) and statecraft and the conflict between dialecticians or sophists and orthodox faith

While at Citrakūṭa (in his 30th year) Rāma seems to have joined other ṛṣis in the āśramas there in the work of teaching for when owing to the troubles (assassinations and oppressions) brought upon the residents by the friction between Rāma and the Rākṣasa rulers of the land the Kulapāti of Citrakūṭa abandoned his Kula (or seceded from it) followed by the majority of the older ṛṣis (teachers) and gaṇas (classes of pupils) to join the āśrama of one Aśva not far away —the remaining tāpāsas (students) clung to the side of Rāma in spite of the dangers of the situation, being convinced in the ṛṣi (or teacher like) qualities of Rāma or finding him resolved to continue in the life of a ṛṣi (4) Rāma had presently to give up this position (5) and the greater

(1) Rām. II 100.

(2) Rām. II 100 38 39

(3) E.g. about learned and well-educated courtiers councillors, ministers and ambassadors; Rām II 700, 16-35

(4) Rām II 116; there is a ṛṣi Rāma in the Bv

(5) Rām II 117

portion (10 years) of the next 13 years of his exile was spent within the 'āśrama-maṇḍala' of Dandaka, or the 'monastic zone' of the Upper Deccan, in residence at, or visits to, the several 'āśramas' or schools of those with whom he had lived formerly (12, in his student days)(1),—and in encouraging discontent and hostility of the 'āśramas', practically conspiring against Rākṣasa control and domination over them(2) Finally, at Pāñcavaṭī he joined and organised a fairly large 'āśrama-padaṇi' or educational settlement(3), on the advice of the Āgastya head of another neighbouring 'āśrama'(4), from whom Rāma seems at this time to have learnt the Āgastyan and Vedic way of using certain weapons with appropriate Vedic mantras ('veda-prokṭena vidhinā')(5) Rāma was now about 40 years of age

Two years later, when 'Hanumant' discovered the abducted Sītā, he thus described Rāma to his wife, to assure her that he knew him as an intimate friend(6) He was still continuing in the courses of study of a Vedic scholar ('brahma-carya-vrate'), he was well-grounded in the Vedas and their Angas, trained specially in the Yajur-veda, and esteemed by Vedic scholars, trained in state-craft ('rāja-nīti'), and proficient in the science of arms ('dhanur-veda'), with knowledge, character and humility, and of perfect body and physique Here follows a full description(7) of the points of excellence of the different limbs, which shows great care still bestowed at 42 on development of bodily powers and graces, while his physical,

(1) Rām III 11, and III 17 generally

(2) Of Rām, II. 116, 119, III 2, 9 and 10 (where Sītā tries to expose the unjustifiable activities of Rākṣas), 30,

(3) That this was no isolated leafy hut in a friendless wilderness is clear from the very full details in the text, some of them quite incidental, vide III 13 30, and 42-64

(4) Rām III. 13 14, 30

(5) Rām. VI (110 108, N S Pr), III 12-13

(6) Rām V 35

(7) *Ibid.* xv. 15 20

martial and civic training has not in the least rusted(1) Rāma has evidently developed a somewhat scholarly bias under the special circumstances of his life. Thus, when bereft of his beloved he soliloquises on Mt Rāyamūka the scenery of the Deccan hills in the monsoon month of Brauṣṭhapada rouses in him reminiscences of the scholastic life until lately so familiar to him(2). Later on again, when Rāma regains his throne (at 43) he retains a very close contact with āśramas and their ṛis. He is in fact more concerned with sumptuous receptions of ṛis and their pupils at court (3) with visits to āśramas within his sphere of influence (4) with maintenance of their right and privileges against rival orders(5) and with schemes for overthrowing any other temporal power beside his own that sought to dominate over the āśramas or monasteries of any brāhmaṇic order by rendering armed support to monkish sedition (6)—than with kingly or knightly adventures befitting a descendant of Māndhātṛ and Sagarā(7)—such martial feats being left to his other brothers Bharata and Śatrughna(8). Throughout the latter part of his career (43—60) (9) schools and schoolmen are more prominently associated with him than princes warriors courtiers or others—whether it is at his coronation on return from exile

(1) Cf. the description of Rāma at 44 b. Varāha to Vālmīki — a. i.

(2) Rām. IV. 28-30. Rāyamūka also was within the confines of the āśramas of Mataṅga and Jātīlī Sabarī (cf. infra).

(3) Cf. Rām. VII. 1-73.

(4) Cf. Rām. VII. 76-82 (V. B. 1 r.)

(5) Cf. Rām. VII. 74-6 (V. B. -Pr.)

(6) Cf. Rām. VII. 73-77; 79; 81; 83-84 (V. B. 1 r.)

(7) Whose exploits are prominent in the Purāṇic account.

(8) Who brought the kinginas of Gāndhārā and Mādhukā (respectively) under the sway of Rāma.

(9) Rāma's career practically ends with the slaying of Śītā; her sons at that time appear from internal evidence to have been youths of about 16,—and they were born the year after Rāma's coronation at 43; so that Śītā's death Rāma was about 60.

when he received homage(1) and addresses(2),—or at court, while he heard complaints (3) and deputations(4), or at celebration of the Horse-Sacrifice, which he almost converted into a hierarchic and educational exhibition(5)

By her own statement, Sītā was 18 when Rāma was 25, or 21 when he was 28 (6), so she was 7 years younger than her husband who married between 16 and 17, Sītā was therefore a wife at the early age of 9 or 10(7) After marriage she lived with Rāma for 12 happy years at Ayodhyā, and was exiled with him in the 13th year, i. e., when she was between 21 and 23 —

(1) Rām VII. 47 (37,—N S Pr.)

(2) Rām. VII. 1.

(3) Rām. VII 71 (P. O R )

(4) Rām VII 73 ff (P O R )

(5) Rām, VII, 104-112 (P O R ) Vide details infra, for all these five points

(6) Rām III 47, 10, 11, 'Astādaśa hi varṣāni mama janmani',

'vayasā pañca vīṃśakāḥ', the context has no reference to the event when Sītā was 18 and Rāma 25, but it seems Sītā here intends to specify her age, in response to Rāvaṇa's queries, with reference either to the time of their banishment, or to that of the meeting with Rāvaṇa The passage may be corrupt, and if we read 'tri' for 'hi' and 'yo'sta for 'pañca', we get the ages 21 and 28, which are short by only one year from the ages of Sītā and Rāma at banishment, as derivable from other internal references.

(7) The Padma Purāṇa (N.B., Padma=Rāma) makes Sītā younger still at marriage, but on this point the circumstantial evidence of the Rāmāyana is more reliable Early marriages are very rare in the Epic and Purāṇic dynastic tradition, and Sītā's case is a remarkable exception Child-marriages for political reasons or other emergencies have however occurred in royal families of most ages and countries, In this particular case it is to be noted that Rāma was the heir to an old king of a decaying dynasty (Purāṇic evidence shows that the glorious days of the Ikṣvākus were over long before Rāma, who was the last flicker of a dying light),—and that he must naturally have been anxious to see the continuity of his line ensured before he passed away It is also likely that this early marriage was due to the parties being brother and sister,—such consanguinous or incestuous royal marriages being fairly common in the Kosalan and other dynasties known to the Purāṇas (on these points of the considerable amount of evidence noted in my AISH.)

During the greater part of their 14 years exile for more than 12 years she resided with Rāma in various familiar educational settlements in the monastic zone of Daṇḍaka and twice within that period,—first in the first year of exile and then in 12th and 13th years of it—they had started an āśrama of their own.—At about 34 or 35 Sītā was abducted by the Irāvāṇ of Janasthāna and Laṅkā and she remained a captive for about a year in his island capital(1) After rescue she returned with Rāma to Ayodhyā as his queen, at 36—but within a year was banished from court her character during captivity being questioned by many. She now lived in forced retirement for about 16 years(2) in the āśrama or monastery of Vālmīki with the women students or nuns of the convent attached to it(3)—there giving birth to her twin sons Kuśa and Lava. At about 53 when her youthful sons were rising to fame as pupils of the great teacher and poet Vālmīki she was recalled to court in view of a formal restoration as queen, but worn out as she was by many tragedies of life she could not survive the shock of a public oath of fidelity demanded of her.

This brief sketch of the periods of her chequered life shows that the greater part of her education as far as it went was post marital and most likely influenced partly by her husband and partly by the special environments of her long periods of exile from court. Yet the first 9 or 10 years of her life were not left blank and uncultured by her parents whoever they may have been(4) Kāṇṭalya or Valdeha—She

(1) 'Bāvaṇa and 'Lavaṇa of Rām and Irāvāṇ of Mbh. are Sanskritizations of the Dravidian 'Irāvay Janasthāna seems to represent Yajñasthāna being the same as the 'Āśrama maṇḍala of Daṇḍaka; for the form 'jana for yajña cf. janaś = 'yajñopavīta

(2) Which was apparently the age of her sons when they appeared before Rāma's court.

(3) Vide infra for details.

(4) Vide n. 7 p. 58; it is possible that the later ascription of a Valdeha parentage to Sītā has its basis in the Purāṇic idiom janaka-duhitā (cf also pitṛ-kanyā) used to designate a sister wife. Vide AHT and ABB



must have been taught to read and write now, she was certainly literate, for later on Rāma gave to Hanumant his signet ring inscribed with his name or autograph ('sva-nāmāṅka') so that the princess may recognise the emissary, and Sītā did read the inscribed ring and identify it(1). The script she learnt was perhaps pictographic, though it is quite possible that by the 15th century B C (when she lived) the 'pre-Āryan pictographs of the 3rd millennium B C had developed into an alphabet(2). The language in which she was taught and the other languages or dialects she learnt, are referred to in an important and curious passage in the Epic(3). Hanumant in disguise resolves to speak to Sītā in 'Mānuṣī' Saṁskṛta ('vācam Mānuṣīm Saṁskṛtām'), for if he were to speak in 'Dvijāti' Saṁskṛta ('Dvijātiriva Saṁskṛtām'), Sītā might take him to be the Rāvana in disguise, so he must use the dialect of the 'Mānuṣas', then again Hanumant feared that as he was a 'Vānara' in appearance, even his 'Mānuṣī' speech might scare her. In view of the facts that Sītā was a 'Mānuṣī' or 'Mānva' princess of the race of Manu of Kośala, that Ravana was half a brāhmaṇa ('dvijāti') by birth, and that the Vānaras also read, recited(4) or acquired learning(4), one obvious implication of this passage would be that while Sītā had primarily been taught the spoken Kṣatriya Mānva Sanskrit of Kośala, she had also learnt, sufficiently well, two other

(1) Rām IV 44, VI 128, 45

(2) The recent Punjab-Sindh excavations seem to indicate a continuous and indigenous history of writing in ancient India, from proto-Sumerian beginnings with Cretan affinities. It is clear now that the term "brāhmī lipi" must have originally meant 'hieroglyphics' literally, i.e., the paintings or pictures used by priests or 'brāhmanas' for recording 'brāhma' or sacred texts, brāhmanas referring to the non-Aryan, pre-Āryan priestly groups in the Pūrāṇic sense, 'akṣara' might refer to 'akṣa' or eye-like pictographs or symbols (cf. Kharosthī or Egyptian), and 'varna' to the paints used in drawing the pictographs.

(3) Rām V 30

(4) Eg., Angada and his men 'pathantī' Rām V 61, Sugrīva's 'śrutam' Rām. V 64, etc.

varieties of Sanskrit the literary and brāhmanical form and the Vānara or corrupt Deccanese form(1) It is not however necessary to take *Saṃskṛtī vāc* as referring to an Aryan Sanskrit speech it may simply mean refined or literary speech of some pre Aryan origin as employed amongst Mānvas brāhman circles and Vānaras respectively all three being kindred groups according to Purāṇic tradition(2) It is also possible that the *Dvijātī* speech in this passage refers to some mixed hybrid dialect spoken by men who were of mixed parentage ( *dvi jāti* ) like Kāvāna (whose mother was a pre Pulaṣṭyan Rākṣasa and father a Pulaṣṭya brāhman with a Vaiśālī Mānva strain—all the elements being more or less cognate traditionally) (3) In any case Sītā knew three languages at least two of which were begun in her childhood the Vānara language being more likely to have been acquired during her long stay in the Deccan In one of those two literary dialects Kṣātrīyan or Brāhmanical Sītā seems to have read a Metrical Book of Animal Fables (4) and committed a good deal of it to memory in her girlhood for later on in the course of conversation with Hanumant she refers to Purāṇic ślokaś of that character sung by Rākṣaś and quotes from memory from

(1) Originally the Epics and the Purāṇas must have been composed in mixed Aryan-Dravidian East Indian dialects belonging to the Mānva regions extending from Kōśala to Aṅga; amongst them would be the Vṛjīya and Gāthā dialect referred to in Vedic literature perhaps the same as the speech of Śānta Māgadhas The Vānara region of the Epic is roughly equivalent to later Telugu zem; it is noteworthy that Telugu is more Sanskritised than other Dravidian dialects. *See Pargiter: AHT pp 498-99*

(2) Cf. Purāṇic refs. in Pargiter AHT

(3) Cf. *see* Pargiter AHT It is to be noted that both Rākṣasas and Vānaras are stated to have belonged to the Pulaṣṭya race and Vālī and Bālā are said to have looked like brothers

(4) Together with Purāṇic and Mahābhārata versions of other similar works, the Book of Animal Fables in verse is the earliest referred to in Indian literature, The Pañcatantra can claim but a small amount of originality

them (1). This Rksa must be the famous contemporary Rksa surnamed the Vālmīkī (who invented the Epic, i.e., the Purāṇic śloka) and the qualification 'Purāṇic' would indicate that the literary dialect employed in that Book of Fables was not the one used by brāhmanas in the Brāhmanas, but that used in Purāṇic or Ksatriyan Epic literature—While she was yet unmarried (i.e., before 10), a 'śama-vṛttā bhīksinī' is said, by Sītā herself, to have come to her father's court, and to have told her mother about her future life in forest retreats (2)—This particular is very significant. The text seems to have become corrupt here, the matter being rather outside the common experience of subsequent ages, evidently 'śama-vṛttā bhīksinī' stands for 'samāvṛttā bhīksunī', or a lady student returned home from school after completing her education, 'Bhīksu' and 'bhīksunī', in the age referred to in the Rāmāyaṇa, cannot have meant monks and nuns in the Buddhistic sense, but somewhat similar monasteries and convents were in existence, under the name of 'Āśramas', in the Epic ages, as we shall presently see,—and in these semi-religious educational institutions there were women resident students as well 'Bhīksū' being the traditional distinguishing feature of studentship from the earliest Vedic times, the 'brahmacārin' or 'brahmacārinī' would also be called 'bhīksu' and 'bhīksunī',—these latter designations coming to be preferred as the Vedic ritual and doctrines of 'brahma' gradually fell into disrepute in the age preceding Buddhism 'Brahma-cārinīs' and 'brahma-vādinīs' (lady students and women theologians) indeed are often mentioned in the Epic-Purāṇic historical traditions (as well as Vedic ones), and some of them actually were connected with the Mithilā court (3)—What this lady scholar told Sītā's

(1) Rām VI. 115 (113, N. S. Pr),—where Sītā dissuades Hanuman from punishing her female guards. 'Rkṣeṇa gītāḥ ślokaḥ Purāṇaḥ or gītāḥ ślokaḥ Purāṇaḥ or ślokaḥ Purāṇe', possibly the Fables were a part of a Purāṇa (cf. similar sections in extant Purāṇas and Mbh.)

(2) Rām II 29, 18.

(3) E.g., Sulabhā and Vācuknavī (in Mbh. and Upan., resp.)

mother about was clearly the outstanding traits of Sītā's character as they appeared to her which in her view marked the girl out for a cloistered career in a forest retreat or a life in the midst of nature there is no need of seeing here a mere prophecy of future exile into the wildernesses for no such thing ever occurred — Rāma and Sītā spending their exile comfortably in various monasteries — as we shall see later on. It is an instance of recognition or discovery of a student type in a girl by a lady teacher. That this bhikṣuṇī was quite correct in her estimate is shown by the many consistent illustrations throughout the Epic of Sītā's love of nature and āśrama surroundings and scenery which comes out in all that she does or says (1) — and also by the polish she could acquire in the āśramas during her exile (as shown in her later utterances in the Epic) (2). Sītā must have been deeply impressed as a girl by the nun's intelligent forecast of the lines of her development (3) and have all along approved of it to remember it with pride even after 13 years of city and court life — Incidentally it is to be noted that with women scholars princesses and queens appearing before the court there could be no purdah for Sītā — About this time also (*i.e.* before marriage at 10) Sītā had a lot of instruction from her mother and other relatives about wifely duties so she told Anasūyā (wife of Vri the head of an āśrama) a venerable elderly woman student and social worker — and she was gratified to find her previous instruction quite up to Anasūyā's ideals (4). This home instruction was supplemented by lessons from śrutī or traditional lore of the Purāṇas (5) (śrutīḥ śru) about the

(1) Of specially her arguments with Rāma at the time of the exile: Rām. II 37 f

(2) *Vide infra*

(3) Of the āV teacher thinking out the future development of the pupil at admission.

(4) Rām. II 117—118

(5) In Epic-Purāṇic literature, śrutī = Epic-Purāṇic tradition (*Vide* AIT 5.5)

eternal character of marriage alliances, from 'famous brāhmaṇs' (1), it is not stated whether these famous men were her private tutors, or were teachers in 'āśramas' where she attended (2), the period of this instruction also is not very clear it may have continued far into her married life, till the age of 21 to 23,—when she referred to it, for a higher study of matrimony could not very well have been thought of before puberty and youth, the instruction in wifely duties also was continued under her mother-in-law till that age (3)

As a result however of this prolonged instruction from childhood in marital relations (i.e., a progressive sex-education), Sītā, by the time she was 23, had developed a very strong wifely personality, becoming neither a doll nor a slave. Thus at the time of Rāma's exile she decided on her own line of action without referring to her husband or mother-in-law, and entered spirited protests against Rāma's proposal to leave her at the court of Ayodhyā, taunting him with being a woman chosen by mistake as son-in-law by her father, and like a professional actor careless about the custody and chastity of his wife (4), and she judged and criticised her husband not only in his domestic but also in his public acts,—about a year and a half later (at about 24), while they proceeded to reside within the Dandaka monastic zone (5), she argued with Rāma regarding the propriety of his engaging in hostilities with the Rākṣasa rulers of the Dandaka, in order to relieve the crisis of the 'āśramas' in the land this she thought was not his business, and she would not like him to attack the Rākṣasas unprovoked, without any offence on their part, while the 'crisis' were not really suffering from any calamity (6). But she was

(1) Rām II 29 17

(2) Vide infra, for Kausalyā and Sītā's associations with renowned teachers and 'āśramas'

(3) Rām II 118

(4) Rām. II, 30

(5) Vide infra for details about this

(6) Rām III 9 and 10

not always a fault finding wife thus Rāma's refusal to entertain Sūrpanakhā's proposal of marriage (1) and his heroism in fighting Khara and his host for her sake evoked her fondest appreciation (2) and during her captivity she ever recalled her husband's high education with great pride (3)

After marriage also Sītā was not kept in seclusion at court. As we have just seen she continued to have her lessons in śruti from famous brāhmins her mother-in-law the Chief Queen Kauśalyā seems to have maintained a close touch with Vedic schools teachers and students and favoured them with her benefactions and presents on suitable occasions thus it is stated (4) that Abhirāpa a Vedic ācārya (professor) of the Taittirīya school (5) and the Mahāsaṅgha (Great Association) of mekball (initiated) students interviewed and received various gifts from her on the eve of her son's exile so it is quite probable that the famous brāhmins who taught Sītā were also members of Vedic schools and that she too was at this time as much in touch with educational institutions as her mother-in-law. This indeed explains the intimate friendship between Rāma and Sītā and Suyajñā Vasiṣṭha [son of the royal chaplain and preceptor and apparently himself a junior teacher (6)] and his wife Rāma having invited Suyajñā to meet him before his departure on exile Suyajñā who was the sakhī of the prince came into Rāma's private apartments.

(1) This was a very tempting offer coming from a beautiful and powerful princess the Rākṣasas are described as a handsome race; Sūrpanakhā is a Sanskritisation of a Dravidian epithet meaning glorious pearl or crown princess. (Vide Pargiter)

(2) Rām. II 30, she rewarded him with repeated embraces on the battlefield

(3) Rām. V 21, 23, 35.

(4) Rām. II 32

(5) These Vedic schools must have been in existence long before Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana's collection of the canon for the simple reason that his was the last of several collections. Thus Vālmīki also is said to have classified the sacred texts.

(6) Being treated with respect due to a teacher

and was received by both Rāma and Sītā (1), Sītā then presented him (2),—for the use of his wife who was her 'sakhī' (3) as well as for his own use,—her personal jewellery (girdles, bracelets and necklaces) and bedroom furniture (coverlets, cots, etc.), along with Rāma's jewels and conveyances (elephants, etc.) (4)

During the major portion of her exile (between the ages of 21 to 23, and 34 to 35), Sītā was free to develop along the lines of her natural inclinations (as discerned by the 'samā-vṛtta bhikṣuṇī' in her early girlhood) No longer restricted by the circumstances of city and court life, she revelled in the country-side like a child of nature, no more oppressed by grave saws about wifely duties, and getting her husband all to herself, she plunged into a perpetual honeymoon, translating her very house-keeping into a romance, and her craving for the delightful and serene surroundings of the 'āśramas', and the ennobling, genial company of the inmates thereof,—renowned sages and bright students, venerable matrons and sweet girls,—was satisfied, yet not satiated, by her 12 or 13 years' residence at various 'āśrama'-settlements—Hers must have been an enviable unfolding of womanhood, sweetened by Nature, brightened by culture and sustained by love

It is really very remarkable that throughout the Epic there is no suggestion that the presence of a young lady in the 'āśramas' was anything unusual or created a delicate or difficult position for either the 'āśramas' or their visitors whom she accompanied, or for herself In fact Rāma, Lakṣmana and Sītā had not lost their way into a wild jungle where divine sages and mythical demons lived (5), as the texts show, they were

(1) There is no trace of any 'Purdah' here

(2) It was not Rāma, but Sītā, who decided upon these gifts

(3) Perhaps also a princess of a related family Vedic and Epic teachers often married in high society, thus Jamadagni had married a Kosalan princess, Renukā

(4) Rām II 32.

(5) As the popular impression goes

[illegible]

- (1)  $\mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  defined by

- (2)  $E_1 \sim 11$   $\text{eV}$

- (2) EA- 11 92

- (4) ~~Elm 111 0~~

- (4) Eft. III of (1) and (2) is not to be read as intended to be the (only one)

- (C) 11 11 11



'ordinary' residence for long in any *one* 'āśrama'(1), specially in the bigger and more crowded ones. Thus at the 'āśrama of Bharadvāja at Prayāga(2), -Sītā apprehended a rush of citizens and country people to visit her at the monastery (it being easier for them to do so there), and so Rāma and Sītā were advised to reside in the 'āśrama' settlement of the more retired Citrakūta hill some miles beyond Prayāga city(3). Again, Agastya, some years later on, thought a big 'āśrama' like his rather unsuitable for the privacy and comforts required by a young couple, and so he recommended the lesser 'āśrama' of Pañca-vatī, not far from his own, for their residence (much as he would like to have them in residence with *him*)(4). At other 'āśramas' within the "monastic zone" no difficulty seems to have been felt either because these were not so crowded as Bharadvāja's and Agastya's establishments, or as they resided in each for only a few months (5).

Country life and freedom of movements in these 'āśramas' seems to have developed in Sītā a sturdier womanhood — With Rāma, she had regular outings, while at the Citrakūta 'āśrama',—ending in a hot repast of roasted meat(6), on return from fatiguing hill-side excursions(7), and she engaged in manual labour and domestic work (like every other 'āśrama')

(1) Resident teachers in Vedic and Epic age were of course mostly married, and instances are known to Epic and Vedic tradition of senior students marrying while still in residence, and continuing studies with their wives living with them. *Vide* details elsewhere.

(2) The form of the name in Rāma's time may have been 'Praudga' (cf. Rv) —The establishment was a very large and prosperous one, a monastery rolling in wealth, *vide infra*.

(3) Rām II. 54

(4) Rām III. 13

(5) The shortest period for such residence was 6 weeks, the longest 1 year, while before repairing to Citrakūta or Pañcavati, their definite intention was to find a suitable place for as long a residence as possible.

(6) Cf. Sītā looking forward to venison, pork and other meats at dinner on return of her husband from the chase. Rām III. 46—49.

(7) Rām II. 96 ff.

inmate)(1) While residing in the Banlaka monastic zone Rama and Lakshmana used to go out in the morning for hunts along with Sita and on one such occasion the party was attacked by one Viradha for their violation of the āśrama regulation (2) Hunting indeed afforded Sita great delight at Lakṣa vaṣṭi while Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa would be engaged indoors (apparently in study) Sita would rove about in the woods and fringes of the extensive āśrama gardens and woodlands copying and enjoying a chase—and if an animal caught her fancy he insisted on its immediate pursuit irrespective of dangers for it is explained she was collecting curio for her palace at Ayodhya (in anticipation of the day of restoration) and was particularly keen on skins and furs obtained by hunting(3) One year's outdoor life was enough to shake off from Sita any courtly timidity she may have cultivated at Ayodhya(4) It required courage in a young lady to feel safe and happy in continued residence in a monastery (the Citrakūṭa āśrama) practically vacated by its inmates out of fear of the rulers of the land whom her husband had incensed—though she was never left alone there(4) After 12 years of country life she was no longer a clinging delicate and helpless wife but a brave and self-reliant woman—While Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were busy organising an āśrama settlement at Lakṣa vaṣṭi Sita lived apart under the guardianship of an old friend of her husband's family Jaiyu (an elderly chieftain of a neighbouring

(1) Rām. II 97 — such work as to fact a characteristic feature of life and education in early times. For details elsewhere.

(2) Rām. III 1 — Viradha was apparently a Kākṣas officer superintending the "monastic zone" Bear-forging, hunting in the āśrama grounds and residing in the āśrama with a cowman wife were the violations of monastic rules, are the Virādha. (The last charge seems to have been a correct one; vide B. 11. 110 for particulars of polyandry in Kōśalan and other ancient ruling families)

(3) Rām. III 4 B

(4) Rām. II. 110

W. Indian tribe), and she soon developed a daughterly familiarity and friendship with him, when he too came up to reside in the same 'āśrama'(1) She was now perfectly self-possessed before strangers, when the king of the country disguised as a visiting 'parivrājaka' (or itinerant monk) called, she invited him to seats, comforts and meals quite freely, and not in the least upset by his indecent suggestions and approaches, she kept on an easy conversation with him, in pursuance of the hostess's etiquette(2) And along with a strong mind she seems to have developed a strong physique as well, for the mighty Ravana had to use considerable physical force at every step to drag her along and prevent her escape(3)

Long residence in the midst of teachers and students of 'āśramas' would naturally have added to the information of anybody, but apart from this general improvement, Sītā seems to have actually taken up certain *courses* of study during this period At any rate after 12 years of āśrama residence she could pride herself on being a 'panditā'(4) (at 34 or earlier),—though Ravana thought that this 'pandita mānini' lady was after all a mūḍhā, a silly thing, to reject his offer of Empress rank(5). And there were several occasions during her captivity (following immediately after her residence in the "āśramas"), which showed incidently that she had, in the course of the previous 12 or 13 years, become a fairly learned woman. We have already seen that her reading and recognising the engraved autograph of her husband on his ring, and her advising Hanumant by quoting

(1) Rām III 14—15 For details see Jātāyu, vide infra When Jātāyu was disabled in battle by Ravana, Sītā bewailed her friend, embracing him, but was torn away from him forcibly

(2) Rām. III 45-49

(3) Rām III 49-52, 60 61, 64

(4) In Vedic tradition too 'panditā' daughters were known and desired, the locality indicated is also Kosala and Videha.

(5) Rām III 49 Ravana himself was a highly educated person

luratic jokes sung by Rikā (from a book of animal fables) refer to the sort of elementary education she received in her girlhood. But her allusion to obstetric surgery in the course of conversation with Hanumant can only refer to some sort of adult training in or acquaintance with scientific dissection of a foetus in abnormal maternity cases(1) conducted by the Āśrama physician and surgeon(2). As already noted she knew three kindred languages at this time of which perhaps only the literary Maṇḍali or Kośalan was the language of her early instruction; at any rate her knowledge of the refined diction of the dvijātis and of the vānara dialect, would be completed by first hand acquaintance with them under the favourable circumstances of her 13 years residence in the Deccan Āśramas(3)—Sītā must have now looked an intellectual woman. Hanumant is no doubt stated to have been a scholarly person and he must have come to know of Sītā's attainments from his friend Rama—but there was clearly something added now to Sītā's personality also which at once suggested to Hanumant's mind strongly academic similes: thus he deems the captive Sītā

(1) Rām V 23 6 [Sītā fears her limbs will be cut up by her raging captors like unto the limbs of a foetus dissected by a surgeon: garbhava-jantoriva śalya-kṛtāḥ].

(2) The AV formula for admission of students show that every Āśrama had its medical officers (vide Leachboro). That maternity cases were not infrequent is shown by all that is said in the Rām. re Sītā's own confinement in the Āśrama of Vālmīki and many other similar references in epic Purāṇic literature.

(3) These Āśramas were run by Aśgīrmas, Gaṇtama, Igastya and other brāhmanas (dvijātis); the temporal authorities in the country were the Rākṣasas, who were dvijātis in both senses (i.e. of semi-brāhmanic and mixed origins); and kindred vānara tribes (of various sections like Rikyas, Golāṅgulas etc.) peopled the country around these Āśramas (e.g. at Oitrakūṭa); there were similar Āśramas in the integral parts of the Vānara kingdom of Kiśkindhā and the dvijāti Rākṣasa Kingdom of Laṅkā. (vide infra for details).—Perhaps Sītā's acquaintance with the Vānara speech was comparatively slight, otherwise Hanumant would have been stated to have chosen his mother-tongue for addressing Sītā.

like remembered tradition of doubtful meaning or authenticity ('smṛtim iva saṁdigdhām' or like vaguely roused memories), like sullied understanding, like learning slackened or rusted ('vidyām praśithilām') from want of practice and application ('āmnāyānām ayogena'), like words ascribed a different sense owing to absense of grammatical arrangement or refinement ('samskāra') (1), again the emaciated Sītā appears to him like the diminished learning of one who reads on the first lunar day ('pratipat-pāthāśīlasya vidyēva tanutām gatā')(2) Such descriptions would be very peculiar and meaningless if they did not allude to Sītā's 'āśrama' education. So also Sītā herself now uses language befitting a 'panditā'. She considers herself to be the fit consort of Rāma alone, just as 'vidyā' (highest knowledge) belongs to the person who is 'vrata-snāta' and 'viditātmā' (i.e. who had returned to home life after taking the ceremonial bath marking the conclusion of his courses of study, and who has learnt the doctrine of 'ātman')(3), and she is definite that she cannot give her love to Rāvana, as an initiated person cannot think of conferring knowledge of Vedic texts on an uninitiated person(4). She must have come to know the nature of school studies sufficiently well to understand and estimate the elements of an average high education, for she could discern that Hanumant's detailed account of her husband's education and special attainments in certain subjects was accurate(5). But when she eulogises Hanumant (on his announcing her rescue) as an ideal man, in whom certain specified physical, intellectual and moral excellences were all found in a harmonious ('śobhana') blend(6), and as

(1) Rām. V. 15

(2) Rām V. 49.

(3) Rām V. 21, for the technical sense of 'vrata' etc, vide AV partien lars elsewhere, the philosophy of 'ātman' and 'brahma' is much older than the Upaniṣads, having its counterpart in the AV and RV

(4) Rām. V. 28

(5) Rām V. 35

(6) Vide details of the harmony under Hanumant's education, *infra*.

an ideal orator whose speech is indicative of the complete eight fold development of the process of understanding(1) — it seems clear that she had at 34 risen above the level of the average student being fully acquainted with the professional knowledge of the teachers of her time as well(2)

After her rescue from captivity and restoration to her husband Sitā for a time reverted to her bridal life as it were at the age of 35 content to be a beloved wife and a bonny queen-consort with no other interests except the joys of youth love and wealth. But it was only for a time while she was expecting to be a mother and the high tide of restoration festivities and pleasures had subsided the second great permanent interest of her life revived and her fancies soared once again across the Ganges to the great Inring āśramas on it and beyond — She now expressed her desire to visit these familiar āśramas and spend a night in each of them she took with her various costly jewels and robes for presenting them to the wives of the munis in the āśramas and escorted by Lakṣmaṇa travelled southwards on chariot across the kingdom spending a night at an āśrama on the Gomati on her way and crossing the Ganges below Prayāga on a big well fitted barge (3) she landed on the site of Vālmiki's āśrama-settlement — Here she learnt that she was not thence to return to court again and she was advised by Lakṣmaṇa to spend her exile in residence with Vālmiki who was a famous muni and a great friend of her late father in law she accepted her

(1) Rām. VI 115 (113 V.S.Pr.). The eight-fold process of understanding is not detailed in the text but the usual interpretation of it is prob. not wrong; in the commentators enumeration of the steps are several really ancient Vedic terms; for details see under Hanuman's education *infra*

(2) For indications of such professional knowledge vide the first part of this work, re education in AV

(3) Manned by Nishās and Dīśas; note consistent connection of these and kindred tribes with the āśramas

misfortune fairly calmly (1), her chief concern being that she might be questioned by the 'munis' of the 'āśrama' about the cause of her fall from favour.—After Lakṣmana had left, the children of the 'munis' of the 'āśrama' discovered the weeping Sītā, and informed Vālmīkī, who came up with his pupils, honourably received and welcomed her (with 'arghya'), expressed his conviction in her chastity, and asked her to repose confidence in him, he assured her that the 'tāpasīs' (nuns and lady students), abiding by 'tapas' (study and penance) in the establishment attached to his own 'āśrama' (2) would ever cherish her as one of themselves (i.e., as another sister student), and he therefore requested her to accept his 'arghya' and enter his 'āśrama' as her own home. She then followed Vālmīkī and his pupils to the women's section of the 'āśrama',—and the ceremony of her 'sampraveśana' (admission) into it was witnessed by Lakṣmana with relief, from the other bank of the Ganges. As the wives of the 'munis' joyfully came forward to meet Vālmīkī, he introduced Sītā to them, declared her innocence, and commended her to their respectful and affectionate treatment, specially as it was the behest of their Master ('guru'), repeating his charge again and again, Vālmīkī returned to his *own* quarters in the 'āśrama' with his pupils (3)—Thus once again, after a brief gap of 2 or 3 changeful stormy years, Sītā was thrown back upon the serene 'āśrama' life she craved for,—but this time without the heaven of the joys of love, of sympathy, respect and attention, however, she had the fullest measure thus when her twins were born, every one in the 'āśrama',—the children of the teachers, the elderly matrons of the convent, even the venerable provost himself,—was at her service (4)—No details

(1) The dignity, restraint and fortitude of the cultured Sītā in the Epic, is in striking contrast with the melodramatic heroine of medieval versions.

(2) For further details about convents and women in the 'āśramas', vide *infra*.

(3) Rām, VII 55—60 (N.S. Pr. 45—50)

(4) Rām VII 78, vide details of the arrangements *infra*. [Sugriva was halting at the 'āśrama' that night, and going up to Sītā in her cottage

are given as to how Sītā was employed during this second Āśrama residence for about 16 years. The care and up-bringing of her children and pining for lost love and honour must have taken up most of her time. It is however stated that the elderly ladies who attended at her confinement cheered her up by chanting the dynastic history of Rāma (1) ballads of Iurānic history were therefore ordinarily read and chanted by the women students of the Āśrama a special interest being developed in the history of the ruling king Rāma for the sake of Sītā. Twelve years (2) after this Satrugṇa found that the inmates of Vālmiki's Āśrama were fully occupied with training in the recitation and singing of his epic poem about Rāma's life history. It seems quite probable from this that it was Sītā's tragic life that suggested to Vālmiki the theme of his epic, and it was she who must have supplied him with all the personal details of Rāma's life and conduct. Satrugṇa's soldiers indeed were surprised at the accuracy of the details in the epic as recited before them in an all night performance arranged by Vālmiki in Satrugṇa's honour: they had their suspicions and were anxious to know more about the history of the composition of the epic than reached their ears—but Satrugṇa stifled their curiosity by saying that it was unbecoming to question Vālmiki about the affairs of *his* Āśrama. Satrugṇa apparently was unwilling to drag Sītā into prominence in this connection (3). It may be presumed therefore that Sītā was engaged during these 12 (or 16)

he joyfully wished the mother good luck.—This makes it very probable that Rāma also visited her occasionally so that Bhavabhūti perhaps followed some authentic tradition in the plot of his famous play.]

(1) Rām. VII. 78

(2) Satrugṇa was busy settling the conquered kingdom of Madhurā for these 12 years; he halted at Vālmiki's Āśrama en route to Madhurā on the night of Sītā's confinement, and halted there again on return from Madhurā after 12 years: Rām. 78; 83; 84

(3) Rām. VII 84-85



years in a great labour of love, in assisting Vālmīkī at his Epic (1)

Certainly, by the end of these long years of 'āśrama' residence, Sītā had won the universal esteem of all 'āśrama' people,—'ṛsis', 'munis', and students. Her popularity and influence with them is shown in the events of the fateful Horse-Sacrifice held by Rāma in the Naimisa "monastic zone", which she attended in the company of Vālmīkī and his 'āśrama' teachers and pupils. The 'parisad' or assembly in which Sītā took her oath of fidelity was attended by numerous 'ṛsis' and students, Vālmīkī himself addressed Rāma and his assembly with considerable warmth, pointing out the injustice done to Sītā, the proposal of her restoration as Queen, and the procedure of the Oath, were approved by all the 'ṛsis', and as she actually took the oath she was warmly applauded by all the 'munis' (2). Before she passed away she learnt she had been appreciated by the only two she cared for, her husband and the 'āśrama' world.

Of the Epic personages belonging to the Kośalan or Videhan ruling families, it is naturally about Rāma and Sītā alone that some details of education are given, but there are certain interesting sidelights incidentally thrown on the education of some of their relatives as well—The other brothers of Rāma were apparently educated in the same manner as himself, particularly Lakṣmaṇa. Like Rāma he was trained to be a man of deeds more than of words, in the battlefield he thus denounces the speeches of Atikāya, a son of Rāvana (3). "By words alone you can never be great, by boasting one does not become good, show yourself in action instead

(1) Possibly a good part of Vālmīkī's epic was Sītā's own composition, and that is the secret of its unparalleled pathos, Sītā was, as we have seen, educated and cultured enough for essaying poetry in refined speech.

(2) Rām VII. 104—112 (P C R)

(3) Rām VI 71



abilities and gifts. This training was of a very high and specialised order, being based on previous Vedic as well as Purāṇic studies of a critical nature, and including a comprehensive knowledge of music, poetics and elocution. And in the course of this professional training, the critical estimates of learned audiences, and contact with all sorts of people and environments in the country must have been of great educative value (1). The intellectual and æsthetic development of Kuśa and Lava was thus superior to their father's, at any rate, up to the age of about 16, after that (with their recognition as heirs-apparent), their further education on the traditional Kṣatriyan (i.e. civic and military) lines must have been taken up at court, but there is no information on this point.

About Śāntā, Rāma's elder sister, it is stated that after marriage with the 'rsi' Vibhāṇḍaka-Kāśyapa's son Rśyaśṛṅga, she resided in her father-in-law's 'āśrama' with her husband who continued in the 'second sort of studentship',—which would imply that Śāntā and Rśyaśṛṅga lived an 'āśrama' life similar to that of Sītā and Rāma during their exile (2).—We have already noted Kausalyā's close touch with Vedic schools, teachers and students, which implies she had a fair measure of 'āśrama' education herself.—The only other related princess (3) about whose education anything is said, is

(1) For further details *vide infra*, re 'śrama' education, and Rām. I 4 with VII. 104—112 (P.C.R.)

(2) Rām. I. 10 ff., with I 9, 5,—where 'dvai-vidhyam brahma caryasya' is thought by comm. to refer to studentship characterised by the Vedic students' uniform, and to that marked by regulated connubial relations, the differentiation is vague and pointless unless we presume that the original distinction was between resident Vedic studentship as a celibate and as a married man living with wife in the 'āśrama',—which was a recognised practice of those times. Rśya-sṛṅga's father indeed was singular enough to start an 'āśrama' where only celibate men students were allowed, but with his son's fall and marriage the experiment ended disastrously, hence, too, the fitness of the reference to Rśyaśṛṅga's 'second kind of studentship'.

(3) The education of another Mānva princess, Ilavilā of Vaiśālī, is referred to,—but as she was not directly related to Rāma's family, the case will be noted elsewhere.

Vedavati(1) a daughter of Kuśadhvaṇa and a niece of Śrādhvaṇa the contemporary Janaka of Videha(2) — Kuśadhvaṇa while he was a prince had become a brahmarṣi (or Vedic teacher) ever engaged in vedābhyāsa (study and recitation of the Vedas) so he named his daughter Vedavati who also grew up to be an mayī a veritable embodiment of Vedic learning as it were the divine Vāk or Logos personified Kuśadhvaṇa wished to make her a bride of Viṣṇu (3) (i.e. something like a dedicated nun a vestal virgin or a temple deva dāsī married to the god Viṣṇu) and so he refused all her suitors—one of whom a chieftain Śombha in exasperation murdered him in his bed at night his noble wife entering his funeral pyre in grief Vedavati continued in a life of religious discipline after her late father's desire as a bride of Viṣṇu in an āśrama close to the Himalayas in the Mithila territory — clad in black deer skins and wearing matted locks and employed in the manner of ṛṣi śiṣyā in study and teaching (arsena vidhināyukta —appointed) The Rāvaṇa of the Deccan and the South (4) in the course of a victorious raid along N. E. India (from S. E. to N. W.) came to that āśrama and was in due form hospitably received by Vedavati she answered all his enquiries but being rather indecently accosted protested against the victor's gross advances Rāvaṇa however attempted violence successfully whereupon she mortified herself by cutting off her hair and immolated herself on a pyre cursing her oppressor (5) —It is clear from this rather remarkable account that the princess Vedavati in accordance with the tradition of learning in her family was given the highest literary and theological education and was fittingly

(1) Pail p. the original form was Vedabhr̥t (Veda-bhr̥t) a name occurring in the Vedic lists of teachers

(2) She may have been the real mother of Bīṭā If the statement that Vedavati was reborn in Bīṭā i. e. in Rāvaṇa has any value

(3) Of the brides of Christ.

(4) Either the same as the Rāvaṇa who abducted Bīṭā or his immediate predecessor

(5) Rām VI 17

a virgin nun dedicated to temple service, being besides a lady teacher of 'ṛsi' rank in the convent, and that, nevertheless, she was not cut off from the secular world, and eminent suitors still deemed her a prize worth attempting by fair means or foul. Her life and education was not in any way unusual;—for, as we shall see presently, the 'āśramas' of those times had many well-educated female inmates like her, dedicated to the service of the gods, and engaged in theological studies, philanthropic work, or pursuit of the fine arts (1).

The Rāmāyaṇa is concerned as much with N E India as with the Deccan and the South, not only with the Mānvas of Kośāla (to the practical exclusion of the Aīlas of Madhyadeśa), but also with the cognate peoples of Kīskindhā, Janasthāna and Lankā, known as Vānaras and Rākṣasas, speaking kindred languages. Being originally and mainly an Epic of non-Āryan heroic tradition, it naturally describes Vānara and Rākṣasa civilization and education in glowing terms, but there is nothing fantastic or improbable in this account: the familiar puerile absurdities in the Rāmāyaṇa are superficial disfigurements due to subsequent ignorant handling, by Northern Āryans, of the historical traditions of a distant ancient South and East.—We should expect therefore education on somewhat similar lines amongst all the three groups, Kośālas, Vānaras and Rākṣasas, and nothing is stated to the contrary in the Epic.

Hanuman (2), the most prominent Vānara in the Epic (and the ex-king Sugrīva's counsellor and ambassador) is stated (3) to have come to Rāma in the dress of a 'bhikṣu', i.e. a 'brahma-cārīn' or Vedic student (4), and to have

(1) Like Śavārī, Anasūyā and Hemā, respectively, vide *infra*.

(2) The original form of the name must have been 'Ānumanthi' = male monkey = Vedic Vṛ̥ṇi kapī, the designation of a chief Dravidian deity.

(3) Rām IV 3.

(4) Cf. *ante*, the reference to a 'bhikṣuṇī' known to Sītā.

Impressed Rāma very much by his educational attainments He was vākya jña and vākya kuśala : i.e. knew the science of words (Grammar Etymology etc) as well as the art of using words (Rhetorics etc) From his speech Rāma concluded that he must have been ( vinīta ) trained in or moulded by studies in the Rgveda have retained or memorised ( dhāraṇ ) the Yajurveda and acquired skill ( vid ) in the Samaveda to be able to speak in the way he did Rāma could also see that he must have besides learnt ( śrutam ) in many ways i.e. according to many different schools ( vāhudhā ) the whole science of Vyākaraṇa (Grammar Philology Etymology and Phonetics) —for though he spoke at length he never used a wrong or unsuitable word he had no mannerisms of expression or gestures and his speech was quite in accordance with the standard excellences of a rhetorical delivery (1) He was in fact an ideal counsellor ( saciva ) for a king and an ideal ambassador ( dāta ) winning his ends by speech Lakṣmaṇa accordingly addressed him from the beginning as vidvān learned sir —His master Sugrīva found in him strength heroism intelligence acquaintance with the proprieties of time and place, and knowledge of the science of polity he was a paṇḍita a master scholar in Naya or statecraft (2) On another occasion Sugrīva speaks of him as gifted with intellect and learning ( śruta ) perseverance and practicalness (3) On the occasion of Vibhīṣaṇa's coming over to Rāma's camp Hanumant showed his superiority over the other Vānara chiefs as a refined well bred and well educated person ( saṃskāra saṃpannaḥ ) —polished light ( i.e. fluent) and sweet yet weighty in his speech —not anxious to show his debating skill ( vāda ) not keen on contests ( saṃgharṣa ) not vain of his talents and with no itching for making a speech (4) Hanumant

(1) These points are given in Rām. IV. 3 20—23

(2) Rām. IV. 47.

(3) Rām. V. 64.

(4) Rām. VI. 17

was of course literate, he knew the script which was used in Kośala, if this was not also in use in the Vānara countries (1) for he could read the 'svanāmānka' or inscribed autograph of Rāma on his ring (2). He knew, besides his own vernacular (the Vānara dialect), two other refined and literary languages, as used by the 'Mānusa' or Mānva Ksat-riyas of Kośala and by the 'Dvijātis' (or the Schoolmen, or the mixed 'Brahma-Rāksasas') of the Deccan and the South (3),—of which he finally chose the 'Mānusi saṁskṛtā vāc' as the medium of his conversation with Sītā (4) —He knew something of drugs and medicinal plants, but was not an expert like Susena and Jāmbavat (5) —His educated mind was always alert in marking the cultural features of the lands he visited in his adventures. Arriving at the romantic hill-fort of R̥ksa-bīla, in the course of his quest of Sītā, he explored it and its history, and made friends with its interesting cultured nun-Warden, Svayam-prabhā(6),—and even while busy accomplishing his object as a secret emissary to the captive Sītā, and making his strategic observations and tests as an enemy spy, he paused to appreciate the orderly arrangements, artistic achievements and feminine-charms in the great R̥ksasa city of Lankā,—inspecting picture-galleries and sports pavilions, and listening to the morning recitations of Vedic texts by private householders, students or master teachers, or to the universal evening dances and sweet songs of women (7) —His scholarly training also comes out in his appreciation and use of similes plainly based on academic experience, in conversation with Sītā who too was well-educated (8),—and also in his careful description of the special features of Rāma's

(1) But as the 'vanara dialect was different the script also would differ.

(2) Rām. IV 44, VI 128, 45

(3) Vide further details under Sītā's knowledge of these 3 dialects, ante

(4) Rām V 30

(5) Rām. VI 71, 42

(6) Rām IV 50-53

(7) Rām V 4, 12, 18

(8) Rām. V. 15 and 49, with 21 and 28

Intellectual moral and physical education before Sitā for her identification (1) — In short Hanumant was a complete man in him was found bodily strength herolam vigour and courage nobleness of spirit ( satvam ) forbearance and humillty learn ing ( ħrutam ) and skil — all being harmonious ( sobhana ) in him (2) —and he was an ideal orator —who alone was capable of speech throughout indicative of complete eight fold ooderstanding in whose mind every item of knowledge arose out of an awakenlog of interest that led to attentive listenlog to teaching and to grasp thereof in whom whatever was grasped by the mind was retained in memory subjected to criticisms and questionings and strengthened by removal of those doubts —thus leading to apprehension of the obvious utilitles of the matter known, and of its ultimate underlying significance or reality (3) —But even such a profoundly in tellectual person lost his balance when he wanted to extirpate the female guards of Sitā's prison house and there is a touch of humour in the account of his dissuasion by Sitā who gave him a quaint little lesson from a Eurāpic book of Animal Fables she knew in her girlhood and thought he too might remember (4)

The education of several other Vānaras is briefly and incidentally mentioned. Of the Vānara chiefs who conferred with Rāma on Vibhīṣaṇa's offer of help Śarabha was acquainted with artha nīṣṭhaya problems of the science of polity and their solutions. Jambavat (who was the chief of the Bkṣa clan of the Vānaras) was noted for his āstra (charm? surgery?) or āstra buddhi (understanding of Vedic hymns or the scriptures, his discernment and flawless speech, and

(1) Rām. V 35—One cannot analyse and describe (or understand and recognise) an education without being himself educated and familiar with the type analysed and described.

(3) Ham. VI, 115.

(3) Rām VI 115.—Traditionally the 8 steps of understanding here referred to are thus technically named: *śrīrūpā* — '*śrāvapa* — *grahapaṇ* — *dhāraṇa* — '*ūba* — *apoha* — '*artha-jñāna* — '*atīva jñāna*

(4) RMm VI 115





wine (1) The juvenile prince Abgada shows by a speech in the battle-field that he had a Ksatriyan training (2) similar to that of Lakṣmaṇa and was a spirited son of a spirited mother (Tārā) he reminded the Vānara warriors of their great and noble families and of their hosts in their jaṇa saṇṇads or popular assemblies and thus exhorted them to withstand and defeat the Rikṣasa onslaught Ye unmanned cowards fleeing thus with weapons cast away ye will be laughed at and derided by your wives and that will be death unto ye living (3)

The women of the Vānaras thus seem to have had a sturdy training similar to those of the Spartans—Tārā daughter of the aforesaid Suśeṇa and consort of both Sugrīva and his brother Vālī (4) seems to have been a remarkable woman combining feminine arts and accomplishments with high abilities in statecraft and oratory and tender emotions with high spirit—voluptuous in easy times yet firm and wise in action when necessary it was practically Tārā who ruled Kiṣkindhā through Vālī and Sugrīva both of whose policies and acts were dictated by her and it was she who arranged for the quest of Sitā while Sugrīva was drowned in his pleasures (5) Sitā must have recognised her superior personality when she invited Tārā to accompany her in the triumphal march to Ayodhyā (6)

The possibilities of education among Vānara women are indicated in the account of the Śavari śramaṇī (7) whom Rāma met in the śrama of Matabga (on the Pampā lake not far from the Vānara capital) (8)—[Śavari is

(1) Rām. V 61

(2) The Rikṣasas and Vānaras are called Kṣatriyas in the Epic.

(3) Rām. VI 64.

(4) Of Sitā, who Virāḍha found was such a common consort; also many other Purāṇic instances; and AṠṠH re polyandry amongst Mānava and kiṣkīndra races.

(5) Rām. IV 13—40, generally

(6) Towards the end of Rām. VI

(7) Rām. III 73—74

(8) For details of location *vide infra*

obviously a tribal and not a proper name, the Śavaras were a Dravidian race (1), and the 'āśrama' being in 'Vānara' realm and frequented by 'Vānaras' (2), a resident Śavarī also would be a 'Vānarī' of a particular clan amongst them,—just as various 'Vānaras' (ruling princes and others) are stated to have been of Rksa or Golāṅgula clans (3)—'Śramana' and 'śramanī' must have meant originally the male and female inmates of 'āśramas' where all worked together (n-śram) (4),—and we have to take 'śramanī' with reference to the 'Śavarī' at Matangāśrama as a 'resident woman-student', rather than as a nun of a Buddhistic order, which sense cannot belong to conditions in the Rāmāyṇic age or the 15th century B C (5)]—In the course of his search for the abducted Sītā, Rāma met one Kabandha (perhaps an Atharvanic sage) (6), who told him of

(1) There is still such a Śavara race in adjacent regions,—perhaps retrogressive specimens of an earlier more civilized people

(2) Vide details in account of Matangāśrama infra, Sugrīva lived here in exile

(3) Thus Vālī and Sugrīva were sons of a Rkṣa chief, as was Jāmbavat, several Golāṅgula chiefs, apparently from Magadha, joined the general 'Vānara' host, there were Rkṣas, Golāṅgulas and Vānaras in Oitrakūṭa 'āśramas' In Rāma's time and in the century or two before it, Rkṣas and Golāṅgulas were in power in Magadha and Anga. The Rkṣas were probably the race later known as the Licchavis, the prevalence of the cult of anthropoid-worship in East U P and Bihar is accounted for by these Dravidian affinities of Kōśala, Tīrhut and Magadha—'Golāṅgula' (=wheat, 'Godhūma') was prob. a totem of an agricultural Dravidian tribe in the Upper Gangetic country.

(4) The sense of joint work and organised institution is to be found all through in the uses of the term 'āśrama', e.g., in each of the 4 āśramas, or even in vernacular uses of 'āśrama'

(5) Cf the parallel of references to 'bhikṣus' and 'bhikṣu īs' in Rāma's time, where these can only mean men and women students in 'brahma-carya śrama' vide ante

(6) A Kabandha and his descendants, noted Vedic teachers, of the Atharvan or Āngirasa clan, are known in Vedic literature, one of them was a contemporary of the Kosala King Māndhātṛ, ancestor of Rāma. The grotesque features of the Rāmāyṇic Kabandha are perhaps to be traced to the stooping sedentary Kabandha teacher of actual life. Apparently this sage Kabandha was commissioned by Rāvana to somehow make an end of the pursuers of Sītā, but who ended by giving them helpful information.

a long lived resident woman student of the Śavara clan (citra jivintī śramaṇī Śavarī) who had attended on the great teachers of the āśrama of Mataṅga (paricārinī tesāṃ) living there even at the present day (1)—expectant of Rāma's visit before she passed away. When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa arrived at her āśrama and were received by her they found the Śramaṇī of charming speech (cāru bhāṣiṇī) and adhering to the path of virtue (dharma samasthitā) (2); they enquired how far her attendance on teachers (guru śuśrūṣā) had been fruitful and gathered that what they had previously heard about her powers and influence as well as about those of her teachers was correct and that she had all along been admitted to the studies of the āśrama in the highest branches of knowledge (vijñāne nityam avahīskṛtā) —she was taught the highest knowledge along with the men students without any difference (3). The maharṣi teachers on whom she attended had passed away while Rāma was at Citrakūṭa āśrama about 11 or 12 years ago (4) and she proceeded with much feeling to show the princes round the āśrama's area to inspect their relics and memorials (5). Having now accomplished her heart's desire (which from the context seems to have been more to enlist Rāma's sympathy and thus to ensure the continuity and revival of her beloved old dwindling school under princely patronage than simply to have a view of his divine face, as ordinarily supposed) Jātilā (which appears to be the Śavarī's proper

(1) Showing that the āśrama was decaying or on the point of abolition.

(2) Or firm in the religious discipline of the āśrama.

(3) This would show that ordinarily women-students were excluded from 'vijñāna' but that exceptions were not rare either.

(4) This shows she was in touch with affairs of other schools some hundred of miles away and was not limited in her interests.

(5) Evidently he was the head of the institution. She showed round the park of Mataṅga-vana, the graceful and brilliant west facing altars ('pratyakṣaḥ śāli vodī') where the sages worshipped with flowers, the place where their academic discourses 'vaikalpa' &c. were proffered.

name) (1), clad in her 'āśrama' uniform of robes ('ambara') of 'cīra' (2), and 'kṛsnājina' (silk and black antelope skins), immolated herself on a kindled pyre even before her visitors (3), hoping thereby to be reunited with her teachers in heaven, to whom she was so dear (4) —We are left wondering whether Jāṭilā the Śavarī was a common wife to these 'maharṣi' teachers, or a 'devadāsī' or 'sevā-dāsī' attached to the temple-monastery(5) on the Pampā, a 'paricārinī' as she calls herself,—or simply a female student surviving the rest of her school probably she was all three combined, this is confirmed by a tradition in the Mahābhārata (400 years later) that a famous lady of the Gautama clan named Jāṭilā was polyandrous, being wife to several 'maharṣis' (6),—At any rate the account of the Śavarī shows that women of S. E. India of the 15th cent B C could sometimes be educated as highly as their men in the same institution (7), could attain wide reputation for learning and influence in the outside world, and be in charge of an 'āśrama' for years together, through strenuous times,—successfully maintaining the rights of the monastery against the King of the country and harbouring his enemies, and securing a revival of its prosperity by enlisting the support of other princes,—practically dedicating her whole life in the service of her school

(1) It is better to take 'jāṭilā' as a name, which it is elsewhere in Epic-Purāṇic lit., rather than as an adjective,—it is unlikely that in a whole account a person should be described only in adjectives without a name

(2) 'Cīra' is perhaps the equivalent of the ancient 'Seris' cloth later called 'cīnāmpuṣa' (Chinese fibres)

(3) Her teachers also courted death in the same way, the practice is well-known in Epic-Purāṇic tradition and continued till Macedonian times

(4) This suggests connubial relations between the 'śraman' and the 'maharṣi', similar instances are known, to early Buddhist literature, in the Brāhminical monasteries of the 6th cent B C, and parallels may be found even in medieval and modern 'maths' of sundry orders occasionally

(5) Cf. the case of Vedavatī, *ibid.*

(6) Cf. AISII, *see* 20, polyandry

(7) It is noteworthy that the Deccan and the South have always been liberal in their attitude towards the privilege and education of women.

Turning to education among the Rākṣasas we find their national (raivāṇ) or Emperor described as having received the highest Vedic education. On his fall in battle his brother Vibhīṣaṇa lamented that Rāvaṇa had been *śhitāgniḥ mahātapaḥ* and *vedāntagaḥ* (1)—i.e. he adhered to the Vedic or brāhmaṇical cult of fire-worship (2) was engaged in high studies and penances and had gone to the farthest end of Vedic studies (or completed them in a thorough manner) (3). As his sons and kinsmen were perishing at the city walls before the onslaught of besieging armies and he resolved to make an end of Sitā the source of all his troubles—an intelligent courtier Śupārśva (4) thus exhorted him. How is it that thou being *veda vidyā vrata snataḥ* hast entertained the thought of killing a woman? (5)—So Rāvaṇa had undergone a course of studies in Vedic lore in some *āśrama* and having finished it had returned to home life from school after the ceremonial bath in the usual Vedic manner. That he had been duly initiated into Vedic studentship according to the Atharva Vedic tradition of school ceremonials is shown by the legends about his self immolation to obtain the favour of Brahman (6). He began his education at his learned father's

(1) Rām VI 111 (109, N B Pr)

(2) Cf. Rām. VI 113 (111 N B Pr) Rāvaṇa had his 'agni hotra'; his funeral was according to the 'brāhmī' ritual in which *drviṣas*, *yājñakas* and *adhvaryus* were employed; and after the funeral rites his widows also were in ancient Vedic manner taken charge of by his younger brother (who too was installed King '*vidhinā mantra-dṛgheṇa*' according to Vedic ceremonial).

(3) The reference might also be to his going up to the advanced studies of the Vedānta i.e. the supplementary Vedic literature consisting of Brāhmaṇas, Aranyakas and Upanishads,—classes of writings which from internal Vedic and Epic-Purāṇic evidence seem to have existed in other specimens than the present books so called even before the final compilation of the 4 Vedas in cir. 1000 B. C.—and which need not therefore be quite an anachronism for B. C. 1400.

(4) Prob. the same as the son of the Suparṇa chief Sampāti and nephew of Jaṭāyu, who was an adherent of Rāvaṇa and refused his request to ask Rāvaṇa to restore Sitā to Rāma (Rām. IV 60—62)

(5) Rām VI 93 (92 N B Pr)

(6) *Vide ante* i.e. the investiture with the girdle in Av

'āśrama' (in the Vaiśālī kingdom) (1), but early left a life of 'svādhyāya' (or Vedic study),—which was followed much further by his youngest brother,—for one of martial exploits (2), at the instigation of his ambitious mother (3), and his career as a soldier was commendable, for even his opponent Rāma declared that "mourning his fall would be improper, for he, a 'ksatriya', had died like a true 'ksatriya', (4) —But he did not altogether forget his experience of studentship or lose touch with the 'āśramas' for he could play the part of a 'parivrājaka' or itinerant scholar well enough to deceive Sitā who had lived in the 'āśramas' for more than 12 years then (5)

As in his own life, so in his sons' Rāvana wanted to combine the two ideals of knowledge and heroic action thus he praises Indrajit (6) as being protected not only by the might of his arms, but also by his intellectual discipline ( 'tapas' ), —no well thought-out counsel of diplomacy or statecraft ( 'matī-pūrva-mantrana' ) being beyond his comprehension, and at the same time stupefying military tactics unknown to other Rāksasa warriors being known to him, and he reminds him that the life and duties of the ruling classes ( 'ksatriya-rāja-dharma' ) requires that proficiency in the different branches of learning is essential along with that in the arts of war,—that while understanding and knowledge is necessary, victory in war is also desirable (7) —Another favourite

(1) *Vide* details of the 'āśrama' of 'Viśravaś', *infra*

(2) Rām VII 10.

(3) Rāvana succeeded to the lordship of the Rāksasas by right of his mother acc to matriarchal law, while she was a princess, his father was a Paulastya brāhman of an āśrama (being however himself desc from another princess), so being a 'ksātropeta dviyūta' (acc to Purāṇic idiom), a 'brahma-ksatra' or a 'brahma-rakṣa' ('rakṣa' and 'ksatra' being equivalents), it was equally natural for Rāvana to engage in 'svādhyāya' or in martial life

(4) Rām. VI 111 (109, N 8 Pr ), *vide* n. 6, above, also n 3, p 89, where Indrajit is instructed in 'ksatriya-rāja dharma'

(5) Rām. III 46 ff.

(6) His son by Mandodarī, dtr of a 'deva-dūsi' by a Yūdava chieftain (*vide infra*).

(7) Rām V 48

son of his Atikāya (1) had attended on the wise elders his strength was his ( Vedic or Purāṇic ) learning ( śruta bala' ) and he was trained in diplomacy and the science of polity at the same time he was foremost of all experts in arms and proficient in riding horses and elephants in fencing and archery (2) — A number of other sons and relatives of Rāvaṇa (who went forth to battle together) were all experienced in warfare and masters of ruses and strategies knew the science of arms and also possessed knowledge of the highest philosophy ( pravara vijñānāḥ' ) (3) — It must have been an extra dose of this literary and philosophic training that produced in warriors like Iodrajit and Atikāya a tendency to indulge in boastful speeches in the battle field (4)

Roused by news of disaster from his careless indulgence and self-indulgence Rāvaṇa's brother Kumbhakarna unwilling still to fight tried to dissuade his brother from hostilities by a speech on the right policy for kings as he understood it amongst his *obiter dicta* so it are these (5) — One who does not think before acting is no master of *raja* (the science of government) a prince resolving to regulate himself according to the traditional authoritative treatises (on politics) ( *śāstra* ) must discover by his improved judgment the true character of his courtiers and friends; the *vaiśrutam* or varied learning of a prince or royal officer ( *rājamātra* ) is futile if he cannot understand his highest good even if he has learnt ( *śrutvā* ) about it the courtiers ( *śaśivas* ) should be aware of the ultimate aims of politics earning their living by dint of wisdom alone ( *artha tattva jña'* and *buddhi jivi* ) officers ( *puruṣāḥ* ) of beastly instincts not understanding the purport of political science ( *śāstras* ) in their impudence desire to make speeches

(1) By a different mother Dhānya mālinī.

(2) Rām VI 71

(3) Rām VI 69

(4) Rām. VI 71, 88, 79

(5) Rām VI. 63



“being admitted into the cabinet ( ‘mantrīsu abhyantārī-  
 “ ‘kṛtāh’ ), the advice of these men ignorant of ‘śāstras’,  
 “professing to secure great glory without proper knowledge  
 “of ‘arthaśāstra’ (politics, economics and administration),  
 “should not be followed, and they should be expelled from  
 “the council ( ‘mantra-vāhyāh’ )”.—But Rāvana claimed the  
 same respect from his younger brother as his professor  
 ( ‘ācārya’ ), and resented his junior’s seeking to instruct  
 ( ‘anuśās ) him (1)—These details should dispel the  
 absurd popular notion that Kumbhakarna was only a beastly  
 glutton on the other hand he is stated to have had a sound  
 training in political science under specialist teachers of the  
 subject ( ‘artha-śāstra’ and ‘ācārya’ ),—so that he was bold  
 enough to criticise his imperious royal brother and expose his  
 councillors —According to the wise Kumbhakarna, Vibhīšana,  
 and Mandodarī his favourite Chief Queen had given Rāvana  
 the best advice on state policy, and that agreed with his (2)  
 —Vibhīšana had been engaged in ‘svādhyāya’ ( studies )  
 at his father’s ‘āśrama’ for a longer period than his other  
 brothers, and had resolved to follow religiously every step of  
 the life-stages ( ‘āśramas’ ) of the brāhmanical scheme (3), of  
 all the merits of Rāvana his studies and knowledge of the  
 whole extent of Vedic literature were the ones that appealed to  
 the ‘brāhmanised mind of Vibhīšana (4), so it is quite to be  
 expected that he should be learned in the science of polity  
 as well.

But in Mandodarī given the same credit for statecraft as  
 Vibhīšana and Kumbhakarna, and made wiser than Rāvana  
 who is to follow her advice in state policy (5), we have an  
 education apparently somewhat unusual for the daughter of a

(1) Rām VI 63.

(2) Rām VI 63

(3) Rām VII. 10

(4) Rām VI III ( 109, N S Pr. )

(5) *Iude n* 1 above, cf Vāli, and after him Sugrīva following the  
 advice of Tārā in state affairs,—*ante*.

temple dancing-girl (1) — Mandodari's mother, Hemā was an expert singer and dancer whom Maya or Māyāvin the rich lord of the hill fort of Ikṣvābala (2) had the audacity to take to wife for which act it is said the gods killed him (3) and bestowed his castle and property on Hemā for her enjoyment and free pleasures (4). Apart from her musical and artistic accomplishments Hemā may have been otherwise fairly well educated — for her dear companion Prabhā (or Svayamprabhā) daughter of १११ Meru Savarni who had an āśrama not far from Ikṣvābala was a regular āśrama student in the uniform of Cira silk and black deer skins abiding in a regulated virtuous life studious and knowing all the sciences (Cira kṛpājīnambarā dharmacāriṇī tāpaś' sarvajña) and we have already seen how Vedavati of Mithilā another highborn devadasi was given the highest Vedic education — Mandodari's grounding in statecraft may have been partly derived from her father (5) who brought her

(1) For the following details see Rām IV 50-53 and the dynastic history of Rāvana as given to Rāma by Agastya in Rām, VII.

(2) Another Deccan Chief of the same name Māyāvin fought with Vālin the Vānara King; he was also called Mahiṣa and Dundubhi; possibly the two Māyāvins are identical; both of them are called Dānava or Asura as distinguished from Rākṣasa or Vānara.

(3) Hemā is called an āpārāya which term with reference to dynastic details and āśrama accounts must mean virgin priestesses of temple monasteries engaged in various temple or āśrama services vide supra for details. Reclaiming a dedicated girl to social life by marriage, was evidently regarded as a sacrilege which was punished by the hierarchy — of course with temporal help. Such help may have been given by Vālin who elsewhere is stated to have killed Māyāvin, if the two Māyāvins are the same. It is possible that Ikṣvābala welcomed Hemā and his army as Hemā possessed it by favour of the Vānara King who killed Māyāvin.

(4) For details vide supra.

(5) If the two Māyāvins are identical, Mandodari's father would be a Yādava prince of Mahiṣmati (Kings of which city were called Mahiṣa or Mahiṣmant — the appellation Dundubhi also being peculiar to Yādava dynastic lists); in that case Mandodari must have received musical and artistic education mainly according to the consistent tradition of the education of Yādava princesses by their fathers (cf. Purāṇas).

up personally and carefully for 13 years after Hemā had deserted her infant and paramour for ever, Mandodarī was married to Rāvana by her father at about 14, so that a good part of her education must have been post-marital, and guided by Rāvana according to Rākṣasa ideas—Women, indeed, amongst the Rākṣasas were apparently important enough to be interested in and offer counsel on the public affairs of their men. Rāvana's victorious career was chalked out for him by his mother (1), and she continued to advice him till the very last year of his life, when she is stated to have addressed him and his ministers in the council chamber in well-worded phrases, urging him to restore Sītā and make a treaty with Rāma, and at Sītā's behest her friend, Saramā, a Rākṣasa lady (2), repaired to the council chamber to learn the result of the Queen Mother's speech (3)—In Śūrpnakhā (the king's sister) inspecting the 'āśramas of the Dandaka "monastic zone" (4), and in Tārakā (the dowager chieftainess of Malaya-Kūruṣa on the Ganges) hostile to certain 'āśramas in her territory (5),—we have other instances of Rākṣasa ladies connected with the 'āśrama' educational system, besides Rāvana's mother Nikasā (or Kaikāsī) who 'coming to stay in the 'āśrama' of the learned Viśravas, herself wooed and won that teacher, living with him there till her sons came of age and recovered their maternal inheritance of Laṅkā (6).

Tārakā's son Mārīca, a friend of Rāvana, driven for his oppression from his principality by the rebellious Vāmanāśrama

(1) Cf. account of Rāvana's early career in Rām III 10 ff.

(2) Stated to be Vibhīṣana's wife in other accounts, and hence be friending Sītā

(3) Rām VI 34

(4) Rām III 17 ff

(5) Rām I 30, III 25. Her son Mārīca started an 'āśrama' (vide *infra*), and her descendants were affiliated to the Viśvāmitra priestly group as the Tārakīyana gotra of it, it is to be noted that various Pulastya (or Rākṣasa) clans were also included under the Viśvāmitra brāhman group in tradition cf. AHT, pp 237, 241, etc

(6) Rām VII 9 ff

under a Viśvāmitra or Kaṇḍika ३१ assisted by Rāma (१) and failing to retrieve his fortunes finally took to aśrama life and started an aśrama of his own in the extreme South of India where his friend Rāvana ruled (२)

Amongst other friends of Rāvaṇa were his counsellors Śuka and Śārṇa whom he scolds thus for failure in a mission (३): Ye have in vain attended on ( paryupāsitaḥ ) your teachers ( Acārya ) aged people ( elders ) and parents ( guravaḥ ) —In that ye have failed to take in ( grh ) the essence of the rāja-dāstras ( pl ) even if ye have taken this in ( 'grh' ) ye have not known it well ( na vijñātaḥ ) and ye only bear the burden of that knowledge with such ignorant councillors ( mārkaḥ sacivaḥ ) I am lucky enough not to have been ruined Clearly Rāvaṇa regarded a bookish schooling without development of practical ability as equivalent to ignorance —His council indeed consisted of ministers of the best intellects addressing them on the eve of the war he opines that that counsel is the best which is the unanimous opinion of ministers seeing through insight of learning ( dāstra dṛṣṭeṣa cakṛanṣū aikamatyam ) the second best is agreement after consideration of differing views (४) —Intellect learning and good breeding were apparently the *sine qua non* at the Rākṣasa court even at an emergency meeting of Rāvaṇa & Saubhā while the chief ministers ( ministers ) were seated according to precedence ( being all of the best intellect ) the qualified all knowing and intellect-eyed amātyas ( courtiers, lit members of the royal household ) and the scholars who helped in settling lines of policy ( paṇḍitāḥ artha nīcaye ) were all seated in order of merit and the 'Saubhā ic etiquette was strictly followed no yellings no gossips no lyings (५) —The Sūtas' at

(१) Rām I, ३०, III २५

(२) Rām. III २१, २५

(३) Rām VI २०

(४) Rām. VI. ६,

(५) Rām. VI. ११

the Rāksasa court, designated 'ratha-kutumbas' ( chariot-warrens ) (1), also underwent a special training for their composite profession : they were to " learn about seasons and " sites ( from the military point of view ), about omens and " signalling ( 'īṅgītāni' ), about expressions or signs of depression, exhilaration and exhaustion ( stimulation and fatigue ) " of chariot-warriors, about the sub-soil ( 'sthala-nimnāni' ), " the level and uneven grounds, the proper time for engagements, about the defects of military organizations ( in the " enemy ranks ), about how to take a steady stand in advancing or sallies, or how to skilfully slip away in retreat while " opposing "(2)

The high level of education amongst the Rāksasas of Rāma's time was due not only to the influence of the Pulastyas and Agastyas ( non-Aīla brāhman or hierarchic groups ) but also to a tradition of learning among the Rāksasas themselves. The Rāksasas are said to have become peace-loving and friendly to priesthoods after the advent of the Agastyas into South India, which then became safe for settlers from the North (3), but before that change, 'Ilvala' and 'Vātāpi' ( Rāksasa rulers of what are now Ellora and Badami ), could speak Sanskrit or the refined speech of the priesthood, so well that they could pose as brāhmanas and entertain brāhmanas at feasts (3). Rāvana and his brothers may have inherited the Pulastyan tradition of sacred learning, through their father a Viśravaśa or Pulastya teacher both of whose parents were learned ( 'viśruta' and 'adhī' ) in the Vedic lore and resident in a Vedic School, and who thus became learned and steadfast in courses of study ( 'śrutī-mān' and 'vrata-rata' ) like them, engaged in 'svādhyāya' at an early age, developing

(1) This designation is not ordinarily used in Epic-Purāṇic tradition. 'Kutumba' is probably a word of Dravidian origin. Apparently 'Sūtas' of N India corresponded to 'Ratha-kutumbas' of S India, just as Kṣatras of the North were equivalents of Raksas of the South.

(2) Rām VI 105 (104, N S Pr )

(3) Rām III 11. The priests were killed after the feasts.

a fine character) (1) but before this Pulastyan influence worked the maternal grandfather of Rāvaṇa Sumāli and his brothers Māli and Māiyatān, had studied the Vedas ( svādhitā ) acquired flawless health longevity and wealth, and established themselves on the path of virtue (2). and Sumāli had sent his daughter Kalkasi to reside at the āśrama of a Pulastyan teacher and attend on him although for a politic end (3)

The Rākṣasas of this age were indeed closely associated with āśramas in many ways —The whole of the monastic zone of Daṇḍaka was under their control and they seem to have attempted a much needed monastic reform which was resented by the āśramas which were organised by Rāma for armed rebellions (4) thus several saṅghas (associations) of munis (scholar monks) assembled at Śarabhaśṅga's āśrama in the Daṇḍaka recognised Rāma as temporal ruler and wanted to be free from the oppression of the Rākṣasa rulers (5) the āśrama of Atri where inmates were uc-chiṣṭa and pramatta (ill disciplined ignoble and addicted to drinking and pleasures) was in constant dread of Rākṣasa chastisement (6) and in the extensive grounds of another adjacent āśrama Rāma Lakṣmaṇa and Sitā were sought to be arrested by a Rākṣasa official for breaking the āśrama regulations (7) the Citrakūṣa āśramas' were also under the temporal authority of Kṣhara Rāvaṇa's cousin and deputy and with the growth of

(1) Rām VII 2 and 3

(2) Rām VII 6, the text *sudharmāḥ sthāpitaḥ paṭhā* is corrupt; it may also be emended to mean 'erected village assembly halls or temples on the road side; this was a characteristic of the Yādava princes of the B.W according to the Bv ( vide AISH )

(3) Rām VII 9 and 10. The Pulastyan influence may however have been exercised earlier; for a Pulastya ṛṣi is said to have rescued a previous Rāvaṇa from Kārtiavīrya Arjuna cir 4 cents. earlier

(4) Rām. II 11; and III 9 and 10

(5) Rām III 6.

(6) Rām II 117

(7) Rām. III 1

sedition amongst the teachers and pupils ( owing to the advent and residence of the Kośalan prince Rāma in their midst ), and resultant repression and assassinations by the Rāksasa rulers, the teachers and their classes seceded or were dispersed, and the monasteries of Citrakūṭa became almost desolate (1), the 'āśrama-padam' or educational settlement which Rāma later on founded or took charge of at Pañcavaṭī, was also under Rāksasa supervision, for Śūrpanakhā ('Surup-nagāī', or 'Surupan akkā'), the sister-consort of the Regent of Janasthāna ('Yajña-sthāna' or 'āśrama-mandala' of Dandaka ), visited the Pañcavaṭī 'āśrama' in state ( the Regent with his army being close at hand ), found her will thwarted by the new-comer Rāma, and proceeded to punish the affront (2), the principal 'āśrama' of the Agastyas was close to this Pañcavaṭī, within the Dandaka monasteric zone, apparently on Lake Śaivala, between the Vindhya and Śaivala ranges (3), ṛṣi-teachers of this 'āśrama' also supported Pañcavaṭī in its stand against the oppressive attitude of Khara towards the 'āśramas'(4)

As already noted, Rāvana's friend Mārīca, had also, previous to his expulsion from his mother's dominion of Malaya-Kāṛusa, exercised regal authority over the 'āśramas' there (also stated to have been within the Dandaka zone), particularly over that of the Viśvāmitras or Kuśikas (called 'Vṛmanāśrama' or Siddhāśrama), which he could not suppress owing to the armed support of Rāma and Lakṣmana(5). The 'āśrama' in which Mārīca thereafter spent his exile, in the monkish uniform of black deer-skins and matted locks, was a flourishing establishment which could provide his imperial friend, the 'Iraivan, with meats and superior drinks and sumptuous entertainment,—and was situated amidst charming

(1) Rām II 116

(2) Rām III 17—30

(3) There were other Agastyan monasteries further South *vide infra* this 'āśrama' seems to have been at Ellora ('Ellora pura') close to Nashik (Pañcavaṭī), for details about the site, *vide* Rām VII 75—82 and III 17.

(4) Rām III. 30.

(5) Rām III 25, 1 30.

woodlands reached by road on mule-drawn chariots not very far from the Indian coast opposite to the Island of Laṅkā (1) In the same region lived an Ṛṣi of great influence on the Tāmraparṇī near its mouth in the vicinity of the golden gated city of the Pāṇḍyas (2) On a high hill top overlooking the shores of the Southern sea (3) was situated the āśrama of a 'ṛṣi Nīlākara Jaśāyu and Sampātī, the Suparṇa (or Vanateya) chiefs of Deccan often visited and resided with him there for long periods this teacher paid visits to lands farther south (apparently Laṅkā) attended by a strange retinue like a king attended by courtiers and guards this following is said to have consisted of sundry fearful animals evidently the 'ṛṣi was a scer of the Tibeto Borman or Mon khmer type with a motley company of masked devil dancers (4) These details are not improbable for Laṅkā was traditionally a land of wonderful magic and stupefying witchcraft

But the capital city of Laṅkā was clearly on a higher plain of civilization Thus Hanumant heard (5) Vedic hymns (mantrān) recited in Rakṣa houses and saw Rakṣas engaged

(1) Rām III 21; 25. The route Rāma followed was Laṅkā hill-fort to sea-coast—along coastal āśramas (side : fire)—across the sea to Indian shore—then drive to Mārīca's āśrama

(2) Rām IV 41 It would be rash to hold this to be an anachronism for Chera was known to Kuru-Pāṇḍitas of the North in the 9th Cent. B C

(3) The peak is called Vindhyan; evidently the extreme S Indian hills also were regarded as continuations of the Vindhyan group of ranges.

(4) Rām IV 60; 61; 62 Jaśāyu and Sampātī worried in some maritime venture had their forces (Pakṣas) destroyed and wandering by sea routes were stranded on the S W coasts; Sampātī then resided for some years as a refugee, with this Nīlākara, who foresaw for him a famous deed, viz regaining his naval forces (Pakṣas—wings—sails) and assisting Rāma in his efforts to recover Sītā from her island captivity: Nīlākara, had just returned from the South (from the context, it must be Lanka where he would have heard about Sītā)—In the above account of Nīlākara, etc. obvious fables and puerilities have of course been weeded out.—Sampātī's son too was a sea-captain in Ravana's service who was educated in āśramas, and who refused his father's request to help in recovery of Sītā.

(5) Rām. V 4; and 18



in 'Svādhyāya' (individual, private studies), from the suburban park, *Āśoka-vana*, he could hear, towards the close of the night, the 'brahma-ghosān' (the recitations of sacred texts) of the 'Brahma-raksas' (priests or students amongst the Raksas), learned in 'śadanga-vedas' (i.e., the Vedas and the six correlated sciences of Phonetics, Grammar, Etymology, Prosody, Astronomy and Ritual Procedure), Vibhisana (himself a full 'āśrama' scholar), en route to his brother's palace from his own (1), heard Rāvana's victory being prayed for with holy utterances by 'Veda-vids' (Vedic scholars), and he saw 'vipras' ('inspired' seers), knowing 'mantra' and 'veda' (2), being honoured by citizens with offerings. The city was not however limited to 'Brāhmanic' knowledge. Hanumant found evidence of a secular artistic culture as well (3), in its 'Citra-grhān' (art-studios), 'Nīśa-grha's (night clubs), and 'Latā-grha's (creeper-covered garden pavillions),—in the 'Citra-śālāh' (art-galleries) (4), 'Krida-grhān, (sports-pavillions and club-houses), flower houses or —exhibitions, and well-appointed drinking bars or saloons (5), and in the universal gay dances and sweet songs in 3 octaves (6). Life in such an environment must itself have been an education, and the proverb 'whoever went to Lankā became a Rākṣasa' had a real foundation, for the Rākṣasa was a cultured man.

In a region close by the hill-fort of the Rākṣa-'bila' 'ghāṭ' or pass in the S. W. mountains, was an 'āśrama' belonging to

(1) Rām. V 18.

(2) The opposition here seems to be between AV and other Vedas, or between hymns and charms, or metrical and prose portions of Vedic literature.

(3) Rām. V 12.

(4) 'Śālā' is a big hall, while 'grhān' are smaller chambers. Since memorial 'śaśānās' of the mausoleum type was called 'grhān' in Vedic times, it is possible that a big building with a number of studios in its rooms constituted the 'Citra-grhān' of Lankā, its central art school.

(5) Many of these institutions were traditional in ancient India, found in historical times as well, e.g., in the Mauryan and post-Mauryan age, cf. Kautilya and Varā, K. Sūtr.

(6) Either using all 3 octaves in the songs, or singing in harmony in the 3 different scales.

a ८1 Meru Śavarṇi whose daughter Irahā was the dear companion of Ilēmā (a deva dāsi and an expert dancer and singer) the fort and palace of Ikṣvāhila which Ilēmā subsequently acquired was managed on her behalf by Irahā (1) whom the Vānara search party under Hanuman found to be an elderly but beautiful spinster in the uniform of a lady student clad in silk and black deer skins knowing all subjects and abiding by the rules of piety (tāpasī cira kṛ pājināmbharā sarvajñā dharma-carivī) In Meru Śavarṇi's Āśrama therefore unmarried grown up girls must have been trained in ordinary studentship as well as in the fine arts often in preparation for dedicated temple service (2) As Ilēmā's daughter Mandodari became Ravana's chief queen the Āśrama of Meru Śavarṇi must have come under Rakṣasa authority or been all along a Rakṣasa school but since Ilēmā's abductor was killed by Vālin the chief of Kīśkindhā it is equally likely that the Āśrama was within the Vānara sphere of influence perhaps the region of Ikṣvāhila (belonging originally to Māya Dānava or rather Māyavi Dundubhi) was on the borderland between the Vānara and Rakṣasa territories

The Vānara races also were familiar with Āśrama education The Āśrama settlement on Citrakūṭa hill frequently visited and recommended to Rāma and Sītā by the Bhāradvāja teacher of Prayaga was resorted to by Gośāhguṇas Rkṣas and other Vānaras—that is the Āśrama inmates or students were mostly of the Vānara race (3) The saṅghas or associations of munis (monk scholars) who approached Rāma at Śarahhaṅga's Āśrama in the Daṇḍaka monastic zone were distributed along the Mandakīni (Godāvari) the Pampā lake and on the Citrakūṭa hill all three localities being in the Vānara realm and inhabited by Vānara races so that these muni saṅghas must have had Vānara members this agrees with the statement that these saṅghas (together

(1) Rām IV 50—53 (desc. of Ikṣvāhila)

(2) Rām IV 50—53

(3) Rām II 54.

constituting a great 'vāna-prastha gana') consisted largely of brahman members, so that there were members of other classes as well(1) The 'āśrama' of Mataṅga on L. Pampā, was clearly a 'Vānara' institution. Pampā was peopled by Vānaras, the 'āśrama' was within the realm of the Vānara King Vālin, who however, together with those Vānaras who adhered to him, was expelled therefrom and excommunicated by its influential head, the ṛṣi 'Mataṅga', for carrying his bloody wars into the 'āśrama' area, Sugrīva lived there in retirement, with those Vānaras who supported his claim against Vālin, 222, Hanumant and other followers, Hanumant himself belonged to the region where Mataṅgāśrama was situated, and both he and Sugrīva were educated in the 'āśrama' way, as we have seen,—and the most likely place for their education would be this Mataṅgāśrama so also, Jatilī, the learned abbess or directrix of Mataṅgāśrama, was a 'Sābarī', belonging to the Vānara racial group(2).—Close to the city of Kiskindhū which was again not very far from L. Pampā and Mt. Rṣyamūka where Mataṅgāśrama was situated, and on the road from Rṣyamūka to the capital city, was another 'āśrama', where of old the 'Saptajana' 'munis' (3) were in residence, before whose premises Sugrīva, Rāma and others bowed in reverence(4)—To the south of Kiskindhā lived one Mahārṣi Kāṇḍu(5), and in his 'āśrama' must have originated the ethical 'gīthā's of Kapva-Kāṇḍvīya to which

Rāma referred Sugriva apparently presuming that Sugriva had read them in his school days(1) —About the Mataṅga āśrama and the Saptajānāśrama the following further details are available. The former(2) was on the way from Pālicavajī to Rāyamūka 3 krotas E. of the Krauñca forest which was 3 krotas E. of the frontier of the Rākāsa province of Janasthāna and was on the western banks of the lake Pampa part of which was known as Mataṅgasaras whose ever fresh intakes were poetically conceived of as born of the sweat drop of tilling disciples in the āśrama. The steep mount Rāyamūka was visible at a short distance from the āśrama and was just in front of the lake rising from its very banks and was guarded by Siṁhagṛha (there being evidently a hill fort here attached to the great abbey) from this stronghold of Rāyamūka could be heard the shouts of the lusty Siṁhāgas residing in the Mataṅgāśrama and sporting on the lake lampā by arrangement (vidhāna) of the 11 Mataṅga āśrama was free from Nāga attacks (3); after him the woodlands of the āśrama were called Mataṅgavāna the āśrama sthāna the site or structure of the āśrama was guhya consisting of or characterised by caves or cave temples (in the Rāyamūka hills evidently) so also on the adjacent Rāyamūka peak was a beautiful spacious cave with a tree bordered large, cool watered reservoir at its entrance wherein Sugriva lived during exile (4); the enclosure of the Mataṅga āśrama and adjacent vāna (park) included an area of 1 yojana around the āśrama and from this area Valin

(1) *Āśramaśloka* 10-11.

(2) *Āśramaśloka* 10-11.

(3) That I being protected by the Aśvinīgas other Nāgas dared not attack; as the only attack apprehended was from the 11 and his Vānara supporters it would appear that the Vānara and Nāga races were identical and that the Aśvinīgas were amongst those Vānara who sided with Sugriva and his friend and were evidently relied upon for their fighting strength (*Āśramaśloka* 2 p. 102).

(4) Sometimes also on the summit of the peak.

and his adherent Vānaras were excluded, on pain of death (1) Afterwards, while the pious lady Jaṭilā the Śabarī held charge of the 'āśrama' (for 12 years), and when Rōma arrived there, Vālin was still afraid of entering the 'āśrama' area to chastise the rebel refugee, Sugrīva, and his party, whom the 'āśrama' protected, the 'āśrama', therefore, though on the decline after the passing of its great teachers, must have yet had a sufficient number of organised inmates (Śiśu-nāgas, Śabaras, and other Vānaras) to be able to keep off the king of the realm from his trespasses and continue as a rebel centre, a prominent danger spot in the state of Kiskindhā. Other details regarding the nature of the education, teachers and pupils in this 'āśrama' have already been noted in connection with the account of Jaṭilā the Śabarī abbess.—The Saptajan-āśrama (2) was apparently something like a suburban school of the Vānara city, being close to it and on the road to it. There was a dense massing of tree-rows round about this 'āśrama', like a fortifying wall ('druma-prākāra'), which could keep back assailants, there were banana plantations on the outskirts of the area thus enclosed, the 3 sacred fires were ever kept burning, and their smoke, gray and brown, coiling round the tree-tops, was visible from the roadside, life in this 'āśrama' was so delightful, that those who entered this La Gio-cosa did not think of 'returning' (i.e. to the house-holder's life), and passers by could hear its flares of trumpets, its songs and recitations in sweet voices, the jingle of ornaments (of women inmates or temple dancing-girls),—and they devoutly bent their heads as they beheld the sacred 'āśrama'. Music, dancing and the fine arts, were evidently the main attractions of this monastic institution, where monks as well as nuns were in residence.

(1) Vālin carried wars and bloodshed up to the very 'āśrama' buildings, while contending with Mahiṣa (probably a chief of Māhismāti) and Māyavī Dundubhi (chief of Rkṣabala, as noted above), subsequently he tried to pacify the ṛṣi Matauga by seeking a conference or interview, which was disdainfully refused

Of the numerous other āśramas mentioned or described in the Rāmāyaṇa several are closely associated with the early life and education of the Manva princes and princesses — and several others with their subsequent careers while some of the āśramas incidentally described refer to earlier periods of history the majority of the āśramas of Rama's time were of ancient origin but a few were started or restored in his time or not much earlier.

As already noted the military instructor of the Ikṣvākus of Ayodhyā had an āśrama and in the sadman (sitting chamber) of this āśrāya were kept the sets of armour and weapons presented to the princes at their wedding for their regular military exercises until taken out of his custody at the time of their exile(1) he was possibly the same as or was assisted in his school by the Upādhyaya (Reader Tutor or Asst. Teacher) Sndhanvan a preceptor of the Kāśīan princes who was versed in all sorts of military exercises and accomplished in the science of Polity ( artha śāstra ) and towards whom Rama urged Bharata to be respectful during his regency( 2 ) — So also the previously noted details about the parting interview between Rama and Sitā and Suyajña Vāsīṣṭha son of and assistant to the royal chaplain and preceptor shows that the latter had already an establishment ( nivedana )(3) grandly enough to befit the many rich presents of conveyances furniture and jewellery from the royal couple and that the women also of the āśramas and the palaces were often intimate friends on equal terms like their men thus the young teacher Suyajña's wife was a sakhī of Sitā and Lakṣmana personally went to Suyajña's nivedana interviewed him there in the hall of the sacred fire altar and most politely invited him on the Crown Prince's behalf to

(1) Rām II 31 29—33

(2) Rām. II 100.

(3) In the same context, Rama's palace-establishment is called a 'Nivedana'; it is also called a Vedman (a specially regal term)

come to his 'niveśana' (1).—At this 'āśrama' of the Vāśiṣṭha teachers in Ayodhyā city (or suburbs), an Ātreya teacher (a 'dur-vāsas' or a member of the Order of the Ragged Cloak), once spent his 'vārsikya' or monsoon vacation, apparently like many other visiting or peripatetic teachers, King Daśaratha visited the teachers at the 'āśrama', and for some days comfortably resided with them and other 'munis' (monks) and 'paramarsis' (senior, higher teachers), engaged in 'Kathās', discourses, incidentally the Ātreya teacher (possibly the same who with his renowned wife Anasūyā hospitably received the exiled Rāma and Sītā in their 'āśrama' in the Daṇḍaka monastic zone) remarked that as he understood Rāma he would not shrink from discarding his three brothers, or even Sītā (newly wedded at this time), in pursuit of fame or duty, the Sūta (or court chronicler) Sumantra, who was also in residence there with the king, was asked to keep this opinion of the visiting teacher a secret, but he told Lakṣmana about it when Sītā was actually exiled later on. This account throws an interesting side-light on the traditional character of the Epic hero, on the intelligent interest taken by the 'āśramas' in princes and state-affairs, and on the familiarity and close touch between teachers and the court-circles (2)

Apart from the orthodox brāhmanical 'āśramas', there were educational institutions associated with secular culture and heterodox doctrines as well, in the city of Ayodhyā. Amongst the former group were, besides the schools of the Vāśiṣṭhas noted above, those of the Taittirīyas (3),—one of whose Vedic 'ācāryas' received gifts of conveyances, silk-clothes and slave-girls from Queen Kauśalyā,—and those of the Kāṭhakas and Mānavas (4),—whose readers and invested students, sedentary and studious as they were, did not work to earn, yet desired the good things of the world, but

(1) Rām, II 32.

(2) Rām, VII 61 (51 N S P1)

(3) Rām II 32

(4) Rām II 32

nevertheless were esteemed by great men for learning receiving for example from Rāma 80 Yanas (mules or mule-drawn chariots) loaded with precious things 1000 Salivāhas (corn carrying or draught oxen) 200 bhadraṅgas (stud bulls) and 1000 cows for supply of delicacies. In the same context an Ṇgastya and a Kauśika evidently teachers of Ṇgastya and Kauśika Śrāmas in the city are stated to have been presented by Rāma with gems gold and silver and cows (1). The Mānava schools of Vedic study probably originated in Ayodhya itself from collateral branches or junior members of the ancient Mānava royal families for the Mānava King Rāma is stated to have received on his restoration and coronation the homage of the Mānavas (or Ikṣvāku clanmen) who were Kulīnas i.e. founders or masters of Kulas or schools and were nigama vṛddhas grown old in Vedic studies (2). The number of Vedic schools must have been sufficiently large to ensure the prized result that amongst the brahmins of Ayodhya (or Kośala) there was no illiteracy and scanty knowledge (3). The numerous regular Vedic students in the city were organised into a mekhalīnām mahā saṅgha which could approach the royal family and the court to state their views or grievances (as they apparently did when the Prince Rāma dear to the student community was suddenly banished), and which received gifts of 1000 coins for each member of the Saṅgha or its deputation from Queen Kauśalyā (4). Apart from the residential Śrāmas there appears to have been certain town hostels ( Śvasathas ) also where advanced scholars resided thus the all knowing Vedic student ( bhikṣu ) Sarvārtha siddha (who was appointed to be the principal Kulāpati of a school near Citrakūṭa) resided in such a brāhmaṇ Śvasatha on the road side (5). Apart from

(1) Rām. II 3.

(2) Rām VII, 47 (37, ¶ 8, Pr)

(3) Rām. I 5—7

(4) Rām. II. 37

(5) Rām VII 71 (P O, R)



regular 'āśrama' work, again, laymen (citizens) well-versed in the 'śāstras' often repaired to the suburban parks (where most of the 'āśramas' would be located) to engage in controversies (1), some of these 'āśrama' 'extension debates, must have brought orthodox and heterodox notions, and theological and secular thoughts into instructive conflict (2)

To the latter group would belong the schools of the Lokāyatika brāhmins, puerile yet proud of their sophistry, preaching meaningless vanities, ignoring the main regulative treatises on law and custom on the strength of their acumen for dialectics ('ānvīksikī buddhi'), and a continual source of trouble to the state (3), also the Purāṇic schools of the Sūtas (and Māgadhas) of these bards and chroniclers there was a crowd in the city (4), and the chief of them, the venerable ('ārya') Citraratha (5), Purāṇic teacher, chronicler, court-poet and old councillor ('saciva'), received from Rāma, along with other Vedic professors, gifts of costly jewels, robes, 1000 cows, and other domestic animals in large numbers (6) The 'Vadhū-sanghas' (ladies' associations or mixed clubs which women too could attend) and 'Nāṭaka-saṅghas' (dramatic societies and theatres), which were to be found in all parts of the city of Ayodhyā (7), and the flourishing 'Utsavas' and 'Samājas' they organised in suburban parks, where acting and dances were the main features (8), must have been secular educative institutions of a sort, so also the 'śiṣya-ganas' (classes of pupils) educated by the citizens ('paurāṇ'), whose lectures or instructions they attended ('suśrūṣante'), well-fastened with

(1) Rām II 67

(2) Such conflict is indicated in what the Rāmāyaṇa records about the Lokāyatas, Jibūh and Sambūka

(3) Rām II 100, 38—39

(4) Rām I 5

(5) Another great 'Sūta' at court was the 'king's friend' and counsellor Sumantra.

(6) Rām. II 32.

(7) Rām I 5—7.

(8) Rām II 67

armour ( varma sudamāṭitaḥ ) must have belonged to secular schools started by individual influential townsmen or courtiers (1) amongst whom were artists and craftsmen of all kinds Sūtas and Māgadhas rich kings officers and merchants who had travelled wide and abroad (2)

There would clearly be an atmosphere of education in a city beautified by well watered broad roads with avenues of flowering trees by rich and tastefully laid out market places by gilt sculptures and paintings by numerous artists and craftsmen and by parks groves and pleasure-villas for mixed companies of men and women in a city bristling with awful ornaments and defences and alive with the activities of heroic warriors and royal officials who knew and were known in foreign countries in a city where the standard of living and dressing was very high and whither merchants with their goods flocked from many lands where music was a common pursuit with citizens dramatic societies and ladies clubs flourished in every ward or neighbourhood and carnivals and social gatherings and dinners were organised wherein merry actors and dancers displayed their art to whose suburban parks in the afternoons lovers drove on swift conveyances for rambles bedecked virgins gathered for sports and learned citizens repaired to engage in edifying debates where the teachers and the priests were all versed in the Vedas and their connected sciences and the brāhmanas were none illiterate or of scanty knowledge or atheistic (3) The standards of material comforts artistic attainments and education, set up in the capital city were evidently carefully followed in other Kosalan towns as well (4) for Śatrughna after taking the city and province of Madhupuri or Madhura from its Mādhyā or

(1) Rām. II 1-2

(2) Rām. I 5-7

(3) Rām. I 5-7 and II 67 (cf 71)

(4) This tendency of copying the bigger city or civilising from the capital centre is explicitly noted for the Mauryan and post Mauryan period : cf. IVāts. Kā. Śūti; it is also traceable in Vedic literature : cf. AIBH re house-structures.

Yādava princes (1), devoted 12 years of his viceroyalty there in colonising it ('niveśanam') with his soldiers ('senā') (2), and the companies of Kośalan actors and dancers (both men and women) (3), as also the merchants with their goods (4),—who followed in the train of his conquering army these new settlers built public squares and separate commercial quarters in the city, and established in it many 'ārāmas' and 'vihāras', or rest-houses for peripatetic teachers and preachers (4) or monks, and monastic educational institutions (5) obviously Madhurā was sought to be converted into a second 'Ayodhyā-on-the-Yamunā' in this way (6) Madhurā, however, had its own 'āśramas' already, before the Kośalan conquest, in fact this was brought about by the Bhārgava ṛsis of the 'āśramas' on the Yamunā, on the bank opposite to the main city of Madhurā (7), who sent to Ayodhyā a deputation of 100 members and appealed to Rāma to intervene in their quarrels with the Yādava State (8)

The cultured atmosphere of Ayodhyā was not new in Rāma's time, in the preceding generation, we are told, the

(1) Shortly after Rāma, Madhurā was re-conquered by Sātvata-Mādhyava

(2) The Greeks, in a later age, did the same thing wherever they settled or conquered.

(3) Kośala seems to have made great progress in literature and art in this age, the epic originated here in this generation, and Vālmīki must have had humbler precursors, so also the 'Kusīlavas' of ancient Indian society are said to have derived their appellation from the patronage of Rāma's sons, the noted epic rhapsodists of this age

(4) Traders and preachers have always helped the conquerors in history

(5) 'Ārāmas' and 'vihāras' here are not to be taken in the Buddhist sense which is later, these institutions were older than Buddhism, and as we have seen elsewhere, itinerant ṛsis and teachers, and monastic and residential educational institutions, go back to the early Vedic times 'Vihāra', the House of Joy, is a very fitting word for a residential school (cf. Vittorino's *La Gioiosa*), all 'āśramas' in traditional literature are described to have been Houses of Joy in every way (cf. 'Saptajanāśrama' above).

(6) Rām VII, 77, 83

(7) Rām VII, 81.

(8) Rām VII, 73-77

preparations and progress of an *aśvamedha* (Horse Sacrifice) afforded scope for the working of various educative agencies expert architects carpenters and wood workers various artisans great artists dancers and actors scholars and astrologers were employed by the court in large numbers amongst the guests at the sacrifice were foreign princes and generals ( *bhāṭas* ) and these with men and women coming from various countries to the festival (1) with citizens brahmapas warriors and nobles were all suitably provided with sumptuous specially erected brick and timber buildings within the festive area (2) between the rituals there were sober yet eloquent disputations about fundamental causes ( *hetu vādan* ) amongst *vīpras* (inspired or enthusiastic scholars) desirous of victory over one another (3) and at the close of the ceremonies the king formally offered the whole kingdom in grant to the *ṛtviks* for their priestly services but being schoolmen engaged in Vedic studies they could not accept a territorial grant and so accepted in lieu its fictitious money value—in gems gold and kine (4) and the master of ceremonies in this big affair was the king's son in law the young *śiṣyaśṛṅga* stated to be one of the best products of the *śāramas* of that age coming fresh from a *kāśyapa* school in the *Kauṣṭhī* valley (5)—Then again the monk scholar ( *muni* ) *Valmiki* was a great friend of *Dāśaratha* (6) and his *śārama* was from ancient times in close touch with the *Kośalan* court (7) so also was the *Bhāradvāja* teacher of *Prayāga* and his great

(1) Rām. I 14

(2) Rām. I 13 6—13

(3) Rām. I 14 19

(4) Rām. I 14 48; there are many Purāṇic parallels to this sort of fictitious grant and recovery of the kingdoms of priest-ridden princes, both before and after the time of Rāma; of the continuance of this tradition in the days of Aśoka

(5) *File other det Naśaśra*

(6) Rām. VII 55 (75; N B Pr)

(7) Rām. VII 78 (PBR)

'āśrama' so often visited by the royal family (1), and as we have already seen, Daśaratha sent his sons to be educated not only to the various Vedic Schools and ṛṣi-'āśramas' in the city of Ayodhyā, but also to the Vāmanāśrama, south of the Ganges, run by a Kauśika ṛṣi, to the Bhāradvāja (Āṅgīrasa) 'āśrama' at Prayāga (2), and to several 'āśramas' further south, within the Dandaka monasteric zone (3), amongst which was apparently the major Agastyan 'āśrama' of the time (4)

It is only to be expected therefore that the ṛṣi and 'āśrama' influence which existed in the Kośalan court under Daśaratha and Kauśalyā (5), before Rāma and in his earlier years, continued or rather increased when Rāma returned to the throne after spending the best part of his life in the great 'āśramas'. Accordingly we find noted as some chief events at the restoration,—the homage of the 'nigama-vṛddha' 'Kulina' 'Mānava' schoolmen, the delivery ('Kathita') of pious discourses ('Dharma-samyuktā Kathā') by great men knowing the Purāṇa (6) (i.e., 'Sūtas' like the 'ārya' Citraratha in Daśaratha's days) (7), the narration of episodes of ancient traditional history (mostly connected with 'āśramas' and ṛṣis) by the great Āgastya teacher from the Upper Godāvārī (8), and the reception at court of ṛṣi-teachers from all parts of the country (9). So also the most important events of

(1) Rām II, 54, 90, 113, VI 126 (124 N S Pr.)

(2) See n 1 above, Bhāradvāja remarked that Rāma had come to reside in his āśrama' after a very long time

(3) Either before marriage or after marriage along with wife *vide ante*

(4) Rāma was under Agastyan influence mainly in the latter part of his stay in the Deccan and continued to be under it during his reign.

(5) For her relations with Vedic schools and teachers *vide ante*,

(6) Rām. VII, 47 (37 N S Pr.)

(7) Perhaps this venerable Citraratha was no other than the chief of the Sūta country of Anga (Campā), Citraratha, the predecessor of Dasaratha Lomapīda friend of Dasaratha Kausalya. Cf the position of Adhiratha of Anga at the Kuru court in the Mbh.

(8) Rām VII, 2-3, 9-10, 17, 30 (35 PCR).

(9) Rām VII, 1

the reign *after* the restoration were,—Sita's visit to the āśramas on the Ganges (and forced residence there) (1) the appointment of a Kula pati or principal to an āśrama at Kālāñjara in the Citrakūṭa hills (2) Kōṣalan armed intervention in the strife between the Bhārgava monasteries of Madhurā and its Yādava rulers in favour of the former leading to extension of Kōṣalan rule to Madhurā where more monasteries now cropped up (3); the chastisement of the sādṛa scholar Sāmbhūka in the upper Godāvari region for his encroachment upon brāhmanical privileges (4) the revisiting by Rāma of the Āgastya āśrama in the same locality (5) and the celebration of the fateful Aśva medha in the hallowed monastic zone of Naimiśa, which amounted to an educational exhibition where minstrels chanted epics and where an assembly of monkish teachers and pupils finally pronounced upon the Queen's alleged guilt (6)

The details of some of these events are interesting and important —The reception of r̥ṣi teachers at Rāma's court on his return is thus described (7) monks and teachers with their pupils came from the East South West and North (8) to Rāma's Niveśana and those knowers of Veda vedāṅgas and experts in many śāstras had yet to stay outside on account of the pratihāra ( viṣṭhītāḥ pratihārārthaḥ ) at length Āgastya asked the dvāḥ stha to report the arrival of the r̥ṣis which he did quickly and was ordered to show them in as they approached Rāma, arising reverentially (from his throne) greeted them ( abhivād ) and offered unto each

(1) Rām. VII 55—60 (45—50 N B. Pr)

(2) Rām. VII 71 (POB)

(3) Rām VII 73—74, 81, 83—84

(4) Rām VII 73—76 (N B Pr)

(5) Rām. VII 76—82

(6) Rām VII 104—112

(7) Rām. VII 1

(8) Note the order the E. & S. coming first; the distribution of r̥ṣi class in this account is fairly accurate agreeing with the historical tradition (for which cf Pargiter AHT)

'pādyā', 'arghya' and a cow (for slaughter), and ordered seats,—spacious and excellently made, fitted with cushions made of Kuśa-fibre stuffings ('kuśāntardhāna-dattesu'), upholstered with deer-skins, and decorated with gold inlay and carvings, the great teachers ('maharṣis'), along with their pupils ('śiṣyāḥ') and their prefects ('purogamāḥ'), were then questioned about the well-being of their 'āśrama' affairs by the king himself — The diplomatic deputation from the Bhṛgu 'āśramas' of Madhurā, above referred to (1), similarly stopped at the palace-gate, awaiting to see Rāma while he was appearing at 'jhārokā' ('darśanam abhicakrāma'), they had come with jars full of sacred waters and fruits for presents, admitted to audience, the 100 ṛṣis of the deputation were asked by the king to take their seats on the elegant and golden 'br̥ṣis', the seats of honour ('āsana-mukhyāni), according to precedence among themselves (2), they submitted that Madhu-Yādava had patronised the monks ('tapasas'), but his successor (3), who had assumed the Rāksasa title of 'Lavana' or 'Iraivan' (4), was oppressing them, so they sought Rāma's help, hearing of his recent success against the greater 'Iraivan' who had oppressed the 'ṛṣis' of the Dandaka monasteric zone, these 'ṛṣis' from Madhurā then helped in the anticipatory instalment of Śatrughna as viceroy over their country,—which was clear treason, with these 'maharṣis' in the vanguard, the soldiers of Śatrughna, forming a mighty army, proceeded to Madhurā in advance, while Śatrughna followed later on, halting *en route* at the 'āśrama' of Vālmīki, another Bhārgava teacher resident within Kośalan territories,—perhaps to take some politic counsel (5)

(1) Rām VII, 73-77

(2) For they were a foreign School unknown to Rāma's court

(3) One of the 4 kings between Madhu and Bhīma Sātvata who recovered Madhurā from Kośala cf Pargiter AHT.

(4) Perhaps while the influence of the more Southern 'Iraivan' of Janasthāna was yet all-powerful

(5) Rām VII, 78-79, cf 84-85 on his return from Madhurā, Śatrughna again halted with his army at Vālmīki's 'āśrama' and resided with him Śatrughna's colonising activities at Madhurā have been noted above

The incidents leading to the appointment by Rāma of a Kulapati at Kālāñjara may be thus summarised (1) A regular Vedic student (bbikṣu) Sarvārtha siddha by name in residence (vas) at a hostel of the Theology School (Brāhmaṇa Āvasatha) cudgelled a certain innocent person who complained to Rāma at court. This injured man had once been the Kula pati (Master of the Vedic School) at Kālāñjara (2) but proving unsatisfactory was expelled and was reduced to the condition of a wandering dog (3) A guard hauled up Sarvārtha siddha the all learned scholar before the king he explained that his way was being wilfully and doggedly obstructed by this dog on the 'ratbyā (the public chariot road) (4) as he was going about on his daily round for alms (5) while the householders' time for alms giving was passing—and so in exasperation he thrashed him. Sarvārtha-siddha courted punishment but he being a brāhmaṇa (a theological scholar or a cleric) could not be severely punished (by the secular court) the complainant solved the difficulty by suggesting that Sarvārtha siddha be conferred the Kaulapatya (Principalship) of Kālāñjara—the suggestion was accepted by Rāma and the brāhmaṇ Sarvārtha siddha went away glad and honoured on the back of an elephant (6) It was apparently

(1) From an account which has been curiously distorted by generations of ignorant transcribers who could not follow situations so familiar to their own age; the section has been regarded as an interpolation but I find it to be thoroughly consistent with detailed as well as general facts of history and culture as derivable from other portions of the epic; e.g. the region of the Citrakūṭa hills was in Rāma's day full of great monasteries, and Kālāñjara is within this area.

(2) The neighbouring Citrakūṭa Śrāmas also, where Rāma lived for a year and taught as a ṛṣi had their Kula pati. The medieval fort of Kālāñjara probably occupied the site of the ancient monastery (for ancient Śrāmas were defensible).

(3) Not to be taken literally as the confused text sometimes does.

(4) Apparently he was begging in the streets.

(5) In accordance with the disciplinary routine of school life of those days.

(6) The post of a Principal was so identically an important one and in the gift of Kings; cf. Imperial Roman education; it would seem that in the time of the brāhmaṇically-minded King Rāma the normally elective position of Kula pati became subject to nomination by him.



a boon instead of a punishment, but it was really the latter, as the complainant, who had fallen from a similar position, explained. "In the same 'Kula' (school), he had been 'Kula-pati' (Principal), and though he thought he satisfactorily discharged his duties (1) [*i.e.*, of maintaining approved diet, duly dividing attention between 'deva-dvijas and 'dāsī-dāsas', *i.e.*, between the 'Divinities' at one end of the scale and the menial establishment at the other, of preserving the sacred articles (of the institution), of engaging only in becoming pleasures, of gentle and polite behaviour, and of doing good to all (the members of the 'Kula)],—he was expelled (2), so that this Sarvārtha-siddha, bad tempered, violent, and a dunce, would not do for the job,—he might bring down 7 times 7 schools for 'Kaula-patya' should not be bestowed on men of all sorts (3)".—Subsequently the cynical ex-principal, called a 'dog' by his successor, retired to Vārānasī for his Diogenic penances (4)

To return to the 'āśramas' associated with the early life of the Kośalan princes and princesses

Rāma's elder sister Śāntā (adopted by her father's friend the Sūta chieftain of Anga) having been secretly married to the young monk Rśyaśṛṅga-Kāśyapa, was accepted as daughter-in-law by his uncompromising father, the 1st Vibhāṇḍaka, only on condition that she led the same 'āśrama' life as her husband in his school, accordingly the studentship of Rśyaśṛṅga is referred to at the Kośalan court as having been 'of the second sort as well' ('*divaividhyam brāhmacaryaśya*'),—a short and technical way of saying that both Rśyaśṛṅga and his

(1) In modern terminology,—the Principal had charge of School-hygiene, hostel and college establishments, school and staff discipline, benefactor's funds, theological or religious education, and the school chapel, museum and library.

(2) Evidently by the Collegiate body as a whole, instances of censure on heads of schools or professors, by students, are known in Vedic literature.

(3) So this was a position open only to merit of the right sort.

(4) Vārānasī, acc. to Puranic tradition, had become a brāhminical cultural centre from the time of Divyavānari, Pratyardana and Alarka, about 150 years before B.C. Cf. AIT

wife the princess Sāntī continued together in the discipline of studentship at the Kāśyapa monastic school (1) —Vibhāṇḍaka & Ārama (2) had excluded women from it altogether unlike the majority of other Āramas noted in the Epic Purāṇic tradition and was clearly looked upon as unique and perhaps as even undesirable (3) the prudery or monkish austerity of Vibhāṇḍaka was rudely shaken and demolished by several witty raids of accomplished light skirts from the Aṅga court (4) and the easy fall of his son Ikṣvāku from jealously guarded celibacy after this the scandalised head of the Kāśyapa Ārama had to allow as usual resident wives of students or other women students —To precisely the same time belongs the education of the dedicated nun Vedavati another Ikṣvāku princess already described in detail (5) in the Ārama of her father the learned Vedic teacher prince Kuśadhara of Mithilā close to the Himalayas in Mithila territory (6) In this Ārama it would appear from those details girls received till advanced youth the highest Vedic education after which they either chose a husband from amongst many eager suitors or became lady teachers in their school (ārseṣa vidhānā yukta) or were married to the temple gods of the Ārama &c became dedicated deva dāsīs devoted to the fine arts it being still possible for them to revert to secular life as mated women and mothers though

(1) Vid pp 78 and n. 2 there

(2) On the Kāśyapa in the Aṅga; the Kamika teacher of Bṛama also had been resident in a monastery on the Kaśyapa

(3) This was apparently popularly regarded as the cause of drought and infertility in the realm, and the task of making a breach in this celibate monastic community was undertaken by the state in the light of a fertility rite

(4) All the major Purāṇas and both the Epics have practically the same account of this episode; it shows clearly along with other similar episodes known to tradition, the extent of laxity and license that could sometimes be found in these ancient monasteries

(5) Vid pp 79—80, and notes

(6) For thence Ikṣvāku passed into Uśantīja, where he met the king of Vāṇījī; Bṛm VII 18

this was naturally regarded as a sin, to be punished and expiated from the priestly point of view (1).

The 'Viśvāmitra' or 'Kausika' teacher, who undertook the further training of Rāma and Lakṣmana in their 16th year, hailed from an 'āśrama' on the banks of the upper Kauśikī beside the Himālavās (in Northern Vṛga) (2). Thence he had migrated South West to Vāmanāśrama, also called Siddhāśrama, to complete his ritual observances and theological qualifications (3) but, clearly, he got mixed up in, or organised, a rebellious resistance offered by this 'āśrama to the exercise of regal authority by the rulers of the land, the chieftainess Tārakā and her son Mārīca, who tried forcibly to suppress him and the monastery (which had in fact become a Kauśika one, being occupied by the Kauśikas (4), but failed,— for the wily ṛṣi managed to secure the charge of completing the ephebic training of the Kośalan princes, and utilised them (and Kośalan resources) in defending his monastery against aggression and spoliation, and in overthrowing the temporal power completely (5). Further details about the Vāmanāśrama

(1) Of the case of Hemū noted before.

(2) Rām I, 37 — The famous founder of the 'Viśvāmitra' ṛṣi family, in the course of his chequered and strenuous career, about 400 years ago, had established himself for a time on the banks of the Kauśikī amidst the Northern mountains, — Rām I 67, apparently these 2 'Viśvāmitra' monasteries on the Upper Kauśikī were identical, — 4 centuries old in Rāma's time.

(3) This is in agreement with the common Vedic practice of migrating from one School or teacher to another for special courses.

(4) Rām I 29–30

(5) Of pp 105 and 107, and refs there — After this the Rukṣasa principality of Malaya-Kūṛṣa (S of the Ganges, opposite Kosala, and corresponding to the modern districts of Mirzapur and Shahabad) must have been brought under Kosalan suzerainty. It is noteworthy that acc to the Purāṇic tradition this same region was under a Mānva or Ikṣvāku dynasty all along in those days, this would imply that in ancient tradition the Ikṣvākus and the so called Rūksasas were one and the same people, as indeed may be supposed from other facts noted above, strangely enough, in those very regions the lingering dialects of Māl and Kurukh are mainly non-Āryan in character (Of. Grierson's Survey).

and its location are as follows (1) It was not far from the confluence of the Saraya and the Gaghra on the southern side of the Gaghra but in the interior near a hill going north for 8 or 10 hours from the Aśrama pedestrians came to the Sona (a distance of between 24 and 40 miles) and this place on the Sona again was at 6 hours walking distance (i.e. between 18 and 4 miles) from the confluence of the Sona and the Ganges—which was then the regular ferry station for boats crossing over to the city of Vaidālī (Vaidālī) the Aśrama area was a block of woodland halfway up the hill sides looking like a dark cloud adhering to them and abounding in monkeys deer and birds. From the topography it seems very likely that the site is that of present Sasaram ( ) After the successful defence of the monastery against the ruling power a party of residents of the Siddhāśrama consisting of students and the teaching staff (ṛṣi saṅgha) with their Kauśika Kula pati and the newly admitted knightly disciples the Kōśāliā princes Rama and Lakṣmaṇa set out for the capital city of Mithilā amidst the Himalayan ranges (3) on an excursion to profit by a visit to a great festival at the Janaka court (4) With their necessities the disciples and the ṛṣi saṅgha occupied 100 śakaṭas (5) which proceeded in a train along with them all these conveyances baggage and the whole company (of no less than 200 men)

(1) Rām I 28 29, 31

(2) Which place-name may have been derived from this Siddhāśrama through a colloquial form 'Sijhāśram' instead of from Sabarāśrama (1000 monasteries) as is ordinarily supposed. The other name Vāṇanāśrama is stated in the Rām to have been derived from the famous Parvāṇī episode of Ball which happened here.

(3) Probably modern Janakpur on the Nepal frontier. The route followed has been noted above.

(4) Such a visit was like a medieval pilgrimage to Rome where the Pope (the Christian Janaka) held court; to the Vedic monastic circles, the Janakas of Mithilā were like Popes in relation to monastic orders.

(5) Śakaṭas of Kikāṭ, M gūḍha are referred to in vedic literature; cf. Bārkaṭ AISH; it is clear that they were following a cross-country road, or a trade-route; for vedic roads cf. AISH.

could cross the Ganges, between the confluence with the S'ona and Viśālā on the Gaṇḍakī, on board one and the same boat, with decks comfortably carpeted and canopied ('sukhāstīr nā') (1); this boat, or rather ship, belonged to other 'ṛsis' i.e., to another local Vedic School, either at the confluence, subsequently the site of Pāṭalīputra (2), or at Vaiśālī, and was placed at the disposal of the excursionists (3), the Mānva King of Viśālā, Su (Pra) mati, received them splendidly, and they were guests for a night at the Viśālā palace (4), thence they proceeded to Mithilā city, halting on the way at the ancient suburban 'āśrama' of the Gautamas (Āngirasas) (5)

On their way to the aforesaid Siddhāśrama from Ayodhyā, Rāma, Lakṣmana and 'Viśvāmitra' had halted at an 'āśrama' at the confluence of the Sarayū and the Gangā, called 'Kām-āśrama' or 'Anangāśrama' (6), and within the limits of the friendly Aṅga Kingdom (7), students there came into residence 'from father to son', i.e., generations of the same families had been educated in this one school (8), the visitors

(1) Or var lee 'sukhāstīr nā', smoothly crossing over the rapid and wide river, more formidable in those days than it is now

(2) The place was perhaps all along an important one, according to the Buddhist tradition, this confluence was, in ancient times before the Buddha, the seat of a non-Āryan King whose daughter married an Āryan stranger, thus preparing the way for the growth of an Āryan township there Cf Pre-Āryan relics excavated at Patna very recently

(3) This indicates some co-operation between Vedic Schools, similar help was given by another 'āśrama' in the same region Rām I 24, vide infra

(4) Above details in Rām I, 45 (also 47 and 48)

(5) Rām I 48 and 51

(6) Said to be associated with legends about Śiva, Kūma or Ananga, Ananga was however the name of one or two Kings of the Aṅga country see next note

(7) This detail is historically quite correct for according to Purāṇic tradition there was no separate Magadha Kingdom in this time, between Kosala and Aṅga, and though Magadha had its Rkṣa Golāṅgulu chieftains it was included within the E. Vānava Kingdom of Aṅga, whose first capital was at Girivraja, as a kingdom separate from Aṅga, Magadha dates from the time of the advent of the Vāsudeva Paurava about 3 centuries later than Rāma

(8) That is the significance of 'janū' in the text, acc. to the comm

had a pleasant reception and sojourn here and crossed the rough and gurgling waters of the confluence over to the south bank of the Ganga on board one of the many boats owned by the monastery (1) on their way to their own āśrama.

The Gautama āśrama above referred to was situated in a park adjacent to the city of Mithilā (in the lower Himālayas) the excursion party from Siddhāśrama found the monastery empty with no resident monks some years previously it was under the ṛṣi Śaradvant Gautama and his wife Ahalya who alone was then still living in it in retirement in expiation of her sin of adultery (2) Ahalya suitably received Rāma and his entire distinguished company and her excommunication apparently ended with this frankly accepted reception (3) When the party reached the court of Janaka Śaradvant and Ahalya's son Śatātmananda who had risen to be the royal chaplain showed sincere gratitude to Rāma and his Viśvāmitra teacher for having reconciled his erring but nevertheless spirited high-souled and renowned mother to his father—as Renuka had been reconciled to Jamadagni of Jore (4)—and fondly enquired about the details of the reconciliation and the welfare of his mother at their old āśrama (5) The details of Ahalya's fall (6) throw considerable light on contemporary monastic life Ahalyā was a much coveted maiden and her many suitors regarded her mentally as their

(1) Rām. I 24

(2) This episode is referred to or described in all ancient literature Vedic or Epic Purāṇic Ahalyā was a princess the twin sister of the Rgvedic and brāhmanised North Pāṇic hero Divodan; her family was regarded as a brāhma-kṣātra one affiliated to the Angirasa brāhman group (to which her husband also belonged) as its Maṇḍalya section [OF AITB for details]

(3) Rām I 48

(4) This reference is very appropriate historically—for the Viśvāmitra ṛṣi was descended from Jamadagni's maternal uncle Reṇuka too was a princess married to a ṛṣi teacher and guilty of a similar sin and a princess of the same Kosalan family to which Rāma belonged This episode was earlier by about 450 years.

(5) Rām I 57

(6) Rām VII 30 (25 P O R)

wife, but she was placed by her royal parents as a trust in the charge of Śaradvant Gautama ('nyāsa-bhūtā nyastā'), who after many years ('vahūni var. āni') sent her back to her parents fully trained or disciplined ('niryātita') (1), the firmness of his character, as also his 'success in studies ('tapas')' or teaching abilities, being thus proved,—Ahalyā was bestowed on Śaradvant to be 'touched as a wife' ('Patnyartha n sparśitā') (2). As Śaradvant made the youthful Ahalyā happy in his company, her previous suitors despaired, one amongst them (3) was exasperated, and coming boldly into the Gautama 'āśrama', espied her like a flame (4), and blinded by rage and passion forced her to yield herself up to him,—but was caught within the 'āśrama' by Śaradvant, who cursed him, and soundly scolded Ahalya for fickleness sprung of beauty 'ruin to thee', he cried "and hence from my 'āśrama' ", Ahalyā pleaded having been deceived by similar appearance (5), and soliciting his favour and pardon was assured that she could be reunited with him if she obtained an absolution from Rāma, i.e., if the Kośalan court (6) adjudged her sin to be not equivalent to wilful

(1) From such details it would appear that Ahalyā could not have been less than 12 years of age when sent to the school and must have been sent back at about 24, after a full 12 years Vedic course, this has to be presupposed for presently she became a Theology teacher in the school (*Vide infra*).

(2) The point of the phrase is that a Vedic student's hand was grasped by the teacher at admission, and Śaradvant who had taken Ahalyā's hand as a pupil was now to take her hand as a wife

(3) Whose identity tradition has veiled under the appellation of 'Indra' or 'Devarāj',—which however seems to refer to a Prince who was also the High Priest of his people [Of the traditional functional difference between 'Devarāj' and 'Dharmāj' or between 'Indra' and 'Dharma' in ancient Indian states]

(4) Teachers' wives in the āśramas' of this time did not live in seclusion

(5) This is a common explanation in the Epic-Purānic accounts of similar scandals in court and priestly circles (*vide* AISH)

(6) This is rather curious, perhaps the offender belonged to the royal family or hierarchy of Vīdoha itself, and as justice could not be expected there, the appeal was to the arbitration of the respected and mightier Kośalan court, specially as a princess was concerned, apparently the Kośalan Court based its decision on the well-known Kośalan case of Reṇukā, referred to by Ahalyā's son

adultery. So she practised penances, became a brahma vidyalā or a lady scholar and teacher in Theology (1) and pleased the Kōśalao princes by her reception—In the Cautama monastery of Mithilā therefore girls were sent by their parents from distant parts of the country to be educated as resident students for many years and such women students sometimes married their tutors, austere sober teachers married in high aristocratic circles and these attractive wives introduced tragedies of love in such monasteries—where however even erring wives could rise to become teachers of the Sacred Lore and be restored to their pristine social position both in learning and in teaching the Mithilan monastery was thus co-educational in character.

Another drama of the time when Rama was young or not yet born was that where one Vodha or Andhaka (2) together with his wife lived in the vanaprastha mode of retired life while their son worked hard in it as a student (3) son of a Vaiśya father and a Śūdra mother as he was (4) he was versed in the Vedas and studied critically and in detail ( *vīcāraṇaḥ adhyāśāśa* ) the Śāstras and other treatises ( *va aśyat* ) regularly in the latter part of the night.

(1) Lexity in marital relations and proficiency in theological lore coexisted in several other famous brāhman and kṣatriya women known to tradition; e.g. Mamatā Āṅgīrasī (vide A1811)

(2) Not referring to blindness but only a proper or family name; Of Andhaka the name of a Yādava King of Mithilā 3 steps later than Daśaratha—or Andhaka the name of an Ātreya Rgvedic ṛṣi contempor. with Daśaratha.

(3) He was fatally wounded by a careless shot of Daśaratha who was looking for game near the Śāraṇa.

(4) But his father referred in his funeral laments to his dead son as ascending heaven in the same way as warriors and other noted Purāṇic Kings; so this Andhaka family must have belonged to the ruling or Kṣatriyan classes; there are several instances in Purāṇic tradition of princes being described as Vaiśyas (perhaps for owning farms and pastures) or as having Śūdra wives and distinguished sons by them; in any case it is clear that persons of all four classes or of mixed birth were owners, residents and qualified Vedic scholars of the monastic schools of this age.



We now pass on to a consideration of the noteworthy features of the great 'āśramas' in which Rāma, Lakṣmana and Sītā spent about 13 years of their 14 years' exile from the Kośalan court (1)

They first came to stay with a Bhāradvāja (Āṅgīrasa) 'ṛṣi' in his 'āśrama' at Prayāga (2) It was situated close to the confluence of the Gangā and the Yamunā, and on the left bank of the latter (for the Yamunā had to be crossed on the way from this 'āśrama' to Citrakūṭa), though apparently the forest lands on the right bank of the Yamunā, also, belonged to it, bearing marks of being used by the inmates of the 'āśrama' for fuel, timber, etc., marking these traces, and the smoke of sacred fires visible from outside Prayāga, Rāma and his companions approached the 'āśrama' (at sunset), and going a 'mūhurta's walk (from its confines) (3) came up to where 'Bhāradvāja' was, and remained at a distance, wishing to interview him Then the three 'entered' (apparently the fire-altar hall), and saluted the great-souled ṛṣi surrounded by 'ganas' (batches or classes) of pupils, who had just finished the sunset fire-worship. Rāma then introduced Sītā to 'Bhāradvāja', who ordered for his guests a cow for slaughter, water and 'arghya', and offered various kinds of food and drinks made from roots and fruits, and arranged for their suitable quarters ('vāsam abhyakalpayat') (4), honouring them with welcome at every step of their halting

(1) They did not roam about friendless and demon-scurled in the wildernesses—that is an unfounded notion, as we shall see presently

(2) Following details are from Rām. II, 51—55. This Bhāradvāja ṛṣi appears from a comparison of Purāṇic and Rgvedic synchronisms to be the same as Pīlu-Bhāradvāja, a Rgvedic ṛṣi, contemporary of Divodāsa and Prastota Sārṅgava of Pāṇcāla, it would be interesting to cull all the priestly information about him, and compare with this Kṣatriyan account

(3) 'Mūhurta' = 2 'ghatikās' = 4 'danda's again, it is  $\frac{1}{15}$  of the average day time, i.e. 12 hours—in both ways a 'mūhurta'—48 minutes, so that 'a mūhurta's walk' would mean a distance of about 3 miles—which shows the extent of the 'āśrama' area

(4) This may be taken to mean 'presented them with suits of robes'

approach Bharadvaja' then sat with them in the midst of monks seated all around together with their pet birds and animals. Bharadvaja said Rāma had come to his āśrama after a long time (1) and that he had heard of his causeless vivāsaṇa (exile) (2) and he invited them to reside with him all along (3) but Rāma declined as he feared that owing to the close proximity of the āśrama to the city (i.e. of Prayāga) the citizens and men from the country side might come to see him and Sītā. It being easy now to see them here (in the monastery) so he requested Bharadvaja to find for him a retired and agreeably situated āśrama where Sītā might live more happily accordingly Bharadvāja suggested the Citrakūṭa āśramas in the hills 10 krośas away. Bhāradvāja then entertained the welcome guest and his wife and brother with all desirable things. Night advanced while they discoursed on various virtuous topics and the three used to princely luxury spent that night in the delightful āśrama of Bhāradvaja quite pleasantly. In the morning Bharadvāja performed farewell ceremonies for them (like a father for his sons) and showed them the pleasant way to Citrakūṭa where he had gone very often.

When Bharata followed Rama to bring him back (4) he came to the same delightful and extensive woodlands of Prayāga vana with fine cottages (uśaja) and orchards or plantations (vṛkṣa deśaiḥ). He went to see Bhāradvāja on foot with his chaplain and ministers only leaving the rest of the retinue and martial outfit a krośa away [but yet within the limits of the āśrama (5)] Bharadvaja ordered

(1) So that Rāma must have several times come to reside in this āśrama or perhaps he was educated for some time here also.

(2) Showing that this frontier āśrama was in close touch with Kosalan state affairs.

(3) Monasteries of those days therefore were not afraid of temporal power and could safely admit persons banished from court.

(4) Following details from Rām II 90—92

(5) Cf. Rāma walking 43 mi. upon distance from the boundaries before he came to the āśrama buildings.

his pupils to bring 'arghya' for 'Vaśiṣṭha' and others, he had already come to know of Daśaratha's death (1), he enquired about state affairs, while 'Vasiṣṭha' enquired about 'āśrama' affairs (2), and he censured Bharata for his supposed hostility to Rāma with whom he sided, and when subsequently Bharata revisited Bhāradvāja on his way back from Citra kūṭa, he did not forget to question him *re* arrangements for the succession, which he approved of (3) —While exercising this moral pressure upon Bharata, the Bhāradvāja abbot was politic enough to entertain him right royally, as the *de facto* King of Kosala, with all his family, retinue and army,—who were brought into the 'āśrama' at Bhāradvāja's request. The ladies of the royal family, led by the three dowager queens, alighting from their cars, gathered round about the great teacher, and were introduced to him by Bharata,—particularly Kauśalyā, Kaikeyī and Sumitrā.—From the glowing description of that monasteric entertainment are culled these features of interest —Ales and spirits ('maireya' and 'surā') were supplied, as also cool and sweet waters, like sugarcane juice, diverse kinds of food and drink,—wines and meats, garlands, musicians and dancing-girls all being arranged on wide lawns, soft with emerald grass —White (i.e., white-washed, 'pucca' or stone-built) 'catuh-sāla's (four-roofed quadrangular sheds vern 'caucilā') and stalls were available in the monastery for the elephants and horses of the royal following, there were 'harmyas' (large mansions), 'prāsādas' (elegant palaces), and their attached 'toranas' (ornate gateways), within the 'āśrama', and in it there was also a separate 'rāja-vesma' (royal residence or castle), like a mass of white clouds (i.e., either plastered and white-washed, or stone-built), fitted

(1) Cf his information about Rāma's banishment before the latter reached his āśrama'

(2) It shows how the ancient practice of visits to 'āśramas' was a doubly educative agency

(3) Rām II 113

with several toraṇas (gateways) —which was fragrant with wreathes and perfumes was quadrangular and spacious and was furnished with beds seats and vehicles —with choice coverlets and all sorts of carpets —with rich wardrobes bright plate and food stocks even Bhārata and his court were pleased with the *śrīmaṣaṣṭividhi* (the arrangements in the block reserved for the residence of princes) there was even a court chamber with throne and canopy (or royal umbrella) and seats for courtiers and retinue —\part from these special accommodations the charming hostels or residential blocks of the scholars (*śrīmaṣaṣṭha*) plastered or painted with yellowish clay (*paṇḍu mṛtika* prob. *mod ramaṣa*) stood on both banks of the river (i.e. the Yamunā) flowing through the *śrīmaṣa* lawns (1)—In the *śrīmaṣa* thousands of women of captivating manners moved about jewel bedecked musicians and dancing girls displayed their art before the royal guest female warders and waitresses employed at the Bhāradvāja *śrīmaṣa* exhorted the guests to food and drink meats and wines each guest was attended by 7 or 8 maids in waiting who massaged him helped him in his bath in the Yamunā and supplied him with drinks —Even the animals of the camp oxen horses camels and elephants were sumptuously fed with sugarcane honey and fried rice —Soldiers happy in the company of hordes of merry girls shouted To Ayodhya we will not go and indulged in eating singing and dancing The servants maids and wives who had come with the army also joined in the entertainments —There were in evidence great copper vessels (*lauhikā*) decorated with (carved or painted) flowers and pinions containing curries of goat meat and ham (*vāṁhaṇi*) and savoury soups mixed with fruit juices (or stewed fruits) cisterns (*kāpas*) full of cream and rice pudding (*pāyasa*) bowls or tanks (*vāpyaḥ*) of malaya ale with adjoining supplies of fried meats fire roasted or

(1) We have already seen that the Jāṇas possessed forest lands on the right bank of the Yamunā also.

pan-fried (fried in 'pithara', viz, venisons, peacocks and cocks ('kukkuta'), 'pātri's 'sthālī's, and 'pātra's, by thousands, made of gold, 'sthālī's 'kumbha's and 'karabhyas', full of various preparations of curds and buttermilk—For bath and toilet, vessels containing various shampoo and toilet powders and pastes, were placed on the steps of the ponds, as also white-stalk tooth-brushes, sandals and shoes, bright mirrors, collyrium-pots, combs and brushes ('kankata' and 'kārca', beside the bathing 'ghāts' were carved and painted seats and beds (for toilet and pleasures), and umbrellas and suites of armour, bows and arrows, were kept ready there for the bathers. Besides the bathing ponds, there were lotus ponds of blue waters, and drinking pools for animals amidst well-laid-out green grass-plots.—Bharata of course profusely thanked the opulent Āṅgīrasa abbot for his sumptuous entertainment and the comfortable accommodation.

The interest shown by Bhāradvāja's 'āśrama' in Kosalan affairs did not decline, and all through the 14 years of Rāma's exile 'Bhāradvāja' kept himself informed about his vicissitudes (1), through the travelling scholars of his 'āśrama' ('pravṛttākhyāli śiṣyāli') (2), who frequently visited the 'purī (the capital city, i.e., Ayodhyā, or perhaps Lankā (3), for the 'Rāvana's' rule extended right up to the Citrakūta

(1) These details from Rām. VI 126 ( 124, N S Pr )

(2) I.e., pupils designated 'pravṛtta's or "going forth into the outside world from the 'āśrama', on excursions", 'pravṛtta' is clearly a school word of the same class as 'samāvṛtta'=students who have returned to home life after finishing their school course, apparently the 'pravṛtta' stage just preceded the 'samāvṛtta' status, or the 'pravṛttas' may have been specially selected travelling scholars who worked as itinerant teachers sent forth from the monasteries at regular intervals, on semi-religious educational missions. Of the similar Buddhist and pre-Buddhist terms 'pra vraj' and 'parivraj', used in an allied but extended sense.

(3) Or the viceregal seat of Janasthāna, which would be nearer than Lankā, the close connection of Rākṣasa rulers with 'āśramas', and visits of Rāma to Lankā, have already been noted, distance is no difficulty. Rāvana and his brothers were educated in an 'āśrama' in Vaiṣālī.

hills close to Prayāga ) So when Rama returned from the South and revisited Bharadvāja's āśrama on his way he enquired from him about the state affairs of Ayodhyā Bharadvāja invited Rāma and his followers to spend a day at the āśrama and then proceed to Ayodhya and the party proceeded along a 3 yojana long road specially provided with fruit tree avenues by Bharadvāja ( i.e. this road belonged to the āśrama area ) (1)

As we have already seen the way from Prayāga to Citrakūṭa 10 kroṣas long was pleasant and much frequented by āśrama people the place was agreeable and away from the bustle of cities and the peoples of those parts were of Vanara Ikṣvā and Coisabgula tribes (2) From before Rama's times many centenarian skull headed ( i.e. bald headed and venerable or shaven headed monkish ) rṣis passed their last days in the retired monasteries of Citrakūṭa — Vālmīki at this time had his āśrama on the Citrakūṭa (3) and here Rāma Lakṣmana and Sita came first and was welcomed by him (4) and close by Vālmīki's āśrama Rāma set up his own cottage (5) — This rudely made cottage was firmly built of strong and finely cut timber ( dāru )

(1) A splendid avenue of flowering trees with intertwining branches forming rainbow-shaped and rainbow-coloured arches is affirmed of Kanya Kāyapa's monastery north of Hāstinapura (in Mbh I 70 2-51)

(2) These and its details from Rām. II 36

(3) It appears that he left this place during the general exodus of teachers and pupils (mentioned later on) and started another āśrama on the site of an earlier one ( vide *infra* ) at the junction of the Tamasi and the Gaṅgā about 40-50 miles to the east of Citrakūṭa

(4) For he was a great friend of their father King Daśaratha ( vide *supra* & *infra* )

(5) Not a lowly hut, as we shall see now; perhaps *parpa* in 'parpa śālī' has to be taken in the other sense of Pālīśa *Āśvattha* or other timber ( used in Vedic houses id. AIVII )

with 'katas' fixed(1), and beautiful to look at,—thatched with leaves, yet protecting from the winds, well-built in appropriate parts of it, and in the same manner as in the 'āśramas' (proper) (2), 'vedi-sthalas' (altar-structures) of various designs (3), 'caityas' (memorial halls for depositing the relics of the dead) (4), and 'āyatanas' (sacred enclosures or temples) (5), were erected (evidently adjacent to the residential 'cottage' and in separate blocks) Rāma and his party formally entered into this newly built 'āśrama', like gods moving into 'sabhā sudharmā' (i.e., with spectacular ceremonial) (6)

(1) 'Kaṭa' here is usually taken as = 'kapāṭa', which is strained and gives a jejune sense, prob 'kaṭa' = dome or cupola, or simply ceiling, Cf 'kaṭāha' (vern 'Kadā (i)') = dome shaped utensil, also 'kaṭa-kā' = collection of camps, i.e., cupola-shaped camps or thatched sheds (for which Cf vern 'chāuni', or thatched sheds, as a synonym for 'kaṭaka'), the roofs of cottages in Southern India (eg in the Northern Circars) are all dome-shaped and thatched with palm or other leaves

(2) Which must have been bigger establishments,—with an humble copy and miniature of which, Rāma now started life as a teacher ('ārṣa carite')

(3) For Vedic altar-structures and then various styles, cf AISH, sec on Building Activities, they were often stone-or brick-built, sculptured or painted, and of considerable architectural pretensions

(4) 'Caityas' were of course not exclusively Buddhistic, the early Vedic literature knows of such memorial structures of different styles of architecture (Cf, AISH)

(5) Temples of various gods are also affirmed of the most important of the Agastyan, 'āśramas' (prob at Ellorā in the Ajanṭā hills), and they must have existed in Kṛṣṇadharma's 'āśrama' in Mithilā, or in Moru Sāvarṇi's 'āśrama' in S Kṛṣṇadharma (where 'brides of the gods' were trained), the majority of the 'āśramas' are stated to have had dancing-girls (or 'apsaras'es) as inmates or worshippers,—so that there must have been temples in these monasteries to employ them suitably *Vide also infra*

(6) This comparison with the 'sabhā sudharmā' shows that a *real monastery* is meant, no mere hut, so also in the (later) Buddhistic sculptural representations, there is not much of architectural difference between a 'sabhā sudharmā' and a 'vihāra', 'sudharmā's were erected (on main roads) by Vedic scholars amongst the Rākṣasa chieftains of this time (*vide ante*), these were thus temple monasteries, where Vedic schools grew up

When shortly afterwards Bharata arrived from Ayodhyā via Prayaga to Citrakūṭa to interview Rāma he espied from the woods on the hill slopes high columns of smoke on the hill top(1) coming up he observed directing flags of tree bark fixed against the tree-stems to mark the routes (to the different cottages etc) in the hill side(2) and following these he reached a graceful cottage (thatched by *nāla* *tūla* and *aśva karpā* leaves and twigs) in the midst of other houses of *pāla* tree wood hewn ready and flowers gathered for decorations lay in the front yard and heaps of dried peat (dung of animals) were stored aside for the winter fires (3) besides the sacred fire on the fire-altar (4) a cottage fire was constantly kept up whose smoke rose in a dense column (5) This cottage of Rāma was a big one (mahati) the floors (or the rooms) were spacious (vishāla like big halls) covered with light kuśa matting like sacrificial altars covered with kuśa on the walls were exhibited various arms and armour(6)—gold plated bows(7) bright arrows and quivers golden scabbards and swords spangled shields gold mounted ghaṭikā skin finger sheathes seats therein were of skins and Rāma was clad in black deer-skins and barked vest—It is interesting to know that just before Bharata came up Rāma and Sītā were together relishing a meal of hot roasted and grilled meats on return to the āśrama after an invigorating outing in the hill side(8)

(1) Details from Rām. II 98-99

(2) It reminds one of the modern Indian hill-station; the details show that writing on bark was known to the āśramas of Rāma's time

(3) Citrakūṭa is a cold place in winter and must have been colder in ancient times.

(4) Which was a separate adjacent structure (*vide ante*)

(5) A chimney in the cottage is indicated

(6) Perhaps not only of the two brothers but also of the pupils whom it is said, they attracted to their newly founded āśrama; pupils' weapons also were kept at their teacher's house of those of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa themselves being kept at the madman of the instructor of the Ikṣvākus (*vide ante*)

(7) It is not clear whether in every case it is 'gold' or 'bronze'

(8) Rām I 96



About 6 months after Rāma had been at Citrakūṭa (1), the inmates of what was apparently the main 'āśrama' in that group of monastic establishments on the hill, became anxious to abandon it and re-establish themselves elsewhere, owing to the hostility of the 'Ravana's' brother Khara and others having been roused by Rāma's coming to reside amongst them (2). The members of the monastic college were conferring secretly, but Rāma could discover from signs what was happening. He pleaded he had done nothing wrong, but the 'Kulapati' (Principal) (3) was firm, and left with his 'ganas' (classes of pupils),—the most aged of the 'ṛṣi'-teachers (4) was commissioned with explaining to Rāma that they were seceding from the place only on account of Rāma, who had brought on Rākṣasa hostility (5), manifested in many ways including assassinations within the 'āśrama'-'sthanas' (precincts of the monasteries) under pretext of friendly meeting (6). The seceding teachers and pupils joined the 'āśrama' of one Asva—Rāma himself was recommended to leave also, as with a wife it would not be safe to live in that vacated monastery. That 'āśrama'-sthāna' (monastic settlement) (at Citrakūṭa), bereft of resident 'ṛsis', Rāma did not quit for a moment (for the sake of Sītā's safety), though some (remaining)

(1) Cf. details from Rām II, 116—117

(2) Evidently political motives were at the bottom of it all, a monastic school started within its jurisdiction by an exiled prince from a neighbouring hostile state, would naturally be repressed by a haughty temporal power, [the frontiers of Janasthāna and Dandaka (which were under 'Ravana') and those of Kosala, touched at least between Prayagā and Citracūṭa, and in Malay Kurusa south of the Ganges, and hostilities between Rākṣasas and Kosalans or other Mānavas were much older than Rāma and Daśaratha, going back to Marutta and Māndhātā's days]

(3) He may have been Vālmīki

(4) So the 'principal' was not the seniormost teacher.

(5) Cf Rām III, 9 and 10,—where Sītā points out to Rāma how he was doing wrong in provoking Rākṣasa hostility for no good reason, and that this might lead to his ruin (*vide infra*)

(6) This reminds one of Śivaṇī, also a chief of the same Janasthāna,

students (tapasas) constantly kept to the side of Rama firm in the conduct of ṛjś (arjā-carite in the professional duty of teachers—or being convinced in the ṛś or teacher like qualities of Rama)(1) Subsequently however for various reasons Rama also finally quitted Citrakūṭa āśrama (2) and with his brother and wife came to Atri's āśrama further south

The venerable Ātreya ṛś personally received(3) and entertained the three guests and introduced his equally aged wife Anasūyā—a lady scholar (tapasī) famous among the people for her work in relieving popular distress famines draughts etc (4)—to Rama and asked her to receive Sita and keep her company. She instructed her about wifely duties on the same lines as Sita's mother relatives and mother in law (as she pointed out) pleased with Sita Anasūyā presented her with toilet creams and powders garlands cloths and ornaments(5). At evening the guests saw the monks (munis) in bāṭabes returning to the monastery (urrama) from their bath with wet bāṭen wear (vaṭkala) and pitchers and lighting the sacred hearth fires. Rāma was told by the scholars (tapasas) that the whole region (6) had come under the

(1) We can quite sympathise with the enthusiasm of the fresh teacher Rāma and the prudence of the older teachers.

(2) Citrakūṭa thus became desolate at least for a time; 11 years afterwards Rāma appointed a Principal over the Kāśīśvara āśramas close to Citrakūṭa hills; the two groups of institutions may have been the same.

(3) Following details from Rām. VI 117, 118, 119

(4) This is noteworthy as showing a normal sphere of action of educated women turned out by the āśramas and the extent of their influence in the country.

(5) So the women students of these āśramas were not converted into stern ascetics remote from the world but retained all the charms and vanities of the fair sex.

(6) I.e. the Daṇḍaka country; even Citrakūṭa and Malaya-kūṇḍa on the confines of the Kōśalan realm as we have seen already.

power of the Rāksasas, who destroyed the scholars ('tāpasas', following the courses of Vedic studentship ('brahma-carya'), whenever they happened to be 'uc-chista' or 'pra-matta', *i.e.*, unmanageable and ill-disciplined, or drunk and indulging in pleasures,—and was asked to prevent the Rāksasas from chastising them(1) The 'āśramas' of the 'āśrama-mandalain' or monasteric zone(2), under the 'tāpasas' or monk-scholars of the Dandaka country, were covered with 'kuśa' (mattings) (3) and 'cīra' or silk (hangings) (3),—and were covered as it were with a sacred grace (halo) (4), they had spacious fire-altar halls, well-kept 'ājiras' (playgrounds or race-courses) (5), surrounding orchards, and lotus ponds, they were the refuge of all men (*i.e.*, from all ranks and lands) (6), 'brāhmanas' knowing 'brahma', 'parama-rṣis' and 'purāṇa-munis'(7) were there in residence, and they resounded with sacred chants, bands of dancing-girls were in attendance for worship at these 'āśramas', and daily 'danced before' (the temple gods,

(1) This clearly refers to an attempt at monastic reform by the temporal Rāksasa rulers that was resented and opposed by the 'āśramas',—which revolt Rāma supported

(2) Following details from Rām III, 1, 2

(3) Vedic Brāhmanical furniture were very often covered with artistic products of indigenous grass and reed weaving industries, silks also were sacred and Vedic materials (*vide* AISH for details)

(4) So, for example, the Oxonian 'tāpasa' regards the Oxford 'āśramas', some of these 'āśrama' features have indeed curious parallels with medieval European Universities

(5) Cf Vedic 'ājī'=race course, and 'rṣis' indulging in racing.

(6) This 'āśrama' characteristic is fully Vedic (*e.g.* in Upaniṣad's), as well as pre-and post-Buddhistic, the 'āśramas' must have developed an University type long before Buddhism, in the Vedic Epic age itself

(7) This evidently refers to a distinction, between teachers of Atharvānic, Rgvedic and Purāṇic subjects respectively Cf the distinction in the AV (*vide ante*) bet the word of god and of man, bet 'vyasas' and 'avyasas', or bet 'vidyā', 'avidyā' and what is neither (*i.e.*, Atharvānic charms, etc).



and then assigned an 'āśrama' (monastery) for residence(1) —In the morning(2), Rāma, Lakṣmana and Sītā went out into the adjacent wood lands, apparently for a hunt, where they met one Virādha hunting, and were attacked by him for violating the 'āśrama' regulations(3), though Virādha lost his life in the conflict, Rāma must have found it impossible to settle down in Atri's monastery, for the party soon proceeded to seek refuge in the 'āśrama' of Śarabhaṅga Gautama(4)

On the way to that 'āśrama' and near it(5), the party witnessed a wonderful sight, an 'Indra's Ratha', from the description evidently a car-procession with idols of Indra, etc. (6), beautiful women took part in it as attendants of the idols (7), and hundreds of youths, sword in hand, broad chested and brawny-armed, wearing red silk, ear-rings and blazing necklets, like tigers, and all aged 25 (being the age of the

(1) This elevation to abbot-hood would come after the monks found out that Rāma was anxious to back them up in their rebellious attitude

(2) In the light of the preceding, perhaps not the very next morning after arrival at this 'āśrama', but 'one morning sometime afterwards'

(3) The violation apparently consisted in (i) hunting within 'āśrama' area (ii) residing without permission as head of an 'āśrama', and claiming suzerain rights over it as against the de jure temporal power, (iii) residing in an 'āśrama' with a common wife (which however was not a rare practice in those days) Virādha was clearly a Rākṣasa superintendent of monasteries, he forcibly abducted Sītā, but was overtaken and killed

(4) Where, as we shall see, seditious monks were better organised than at Atri's 'āśrama'

(5) Following details from Rām. III 5—6

(6) The practice of carrying idols in procession on cars is very ancient, and the Buddhist car-festivals were simply adaptations of an older indigenous institution, big processional cars, of many doors, on many wheels and on trucks or stands, are known to early Vedic literature, (vide details in AISH), so a car festival in the 15th cent B. C. need not be an anachronism, specially as "idols of Indra" were early Vedic things

(7) These would largely be the 'āśrama' 'apsaras', virgins on the 'apsas' or front of processional cars, as suggested above. So this Gautama 'āśrama' also, like other 'āśramas' of the Dandakā monastic zone, had its dedicated dancing-girls (and attendant 'pāṇḍita-tī') along with ordinary gṛha students

gods ever in first youth) marching in the vanguard in procession (1) Rāma and his party appeared before Śarabhaṅga in the fire altar hall of his āśrama were requested to take seats there and were invited to be his guests and allotted quarters and were recommended to visit Sutiśpa's āśrama next. While they were in residence there two important events occurred: the aged abbot Śarabhaṅga immolated himself on a pyre before all (2) and certain muni saṅghas (monastic orders or associations)—characterised by different schemes of mortification they affected distributed along the Māndākinī (Godāvarī) on the Pampa lake and in the Citrakūṭa hills and forming a great vana prasthā gṛāma (community or guild of monk teachers resident in countryside āśrama'-settlements) whereof the members were both brāhmaṇ and non brāhmaṇ—approached Rāma in this āśrama with the request that he may protect them from the oppression of the Rākṣasa rulers hailing him as their sovereign and thus bound to save them (3).

From Śarabhaṅga's āśrama the party passed on to Sutiśpa's (4) situated on a high peak like a massive cloud with adjacent woodlands fruit orchards and flower gardens—at

(1) The Hellenic parallel is noteworthy; these Indian and Hellenic cult processions may have had a common W. Asiatic source. Like tigers may possibly refer to actual tiger masks and painted yellow and black stripes; in the central parts of India (what was once the Daṇḍaka country) this is still a popular festive practice. The age of 25 here is significant; it shows that adolescence was regarded as lasting till 25 and that at 25 youths of the āśramas were members of armed 'Ephēbie bands with sufficient physical and martial exercise and were requisitioned (along with the young women of the 'āśramas') for religious processions as in ancient Greece.

(2) Self-immolation of the aged, specially in scholarly circles was an ancient brāhmaṇical practice often referred to in early literature; in historical times the Macedonians witnessed such a suicide of an itinerant brāhmaṇ scholar at Babylon.

(3) This reaffirms the already noted reasonable character of the relations between the 'āśramas' under Rākṣasa dominion and Rāma the foreign intruding Kōśalan prince.

(4) Following details from Rām III —8

one end whereof stood the 'āśrama', beautified with 'cīra' (silk hangings) and garlands (festoons), in the midst of all this beauty Sūtiksṇa was seated engaged in mortifications, besmeared with dirt and mud and bearing tangled matted locks ( 'mala-pañka-jaṭā-dhara' ), and silent(1) —Rāma and his companions announced themselves to him, and requested the favour of his speaking to them. Though apparently a 'renouncer', Sūtiksṇa kept himself well-informed, and had heard of Rāma's exile at Citrakūṭa. On Rāma's mentioning to Sūtiksṇa Śarabhaṅga's introduction and recommendation to stay with him, Sūtiksṇa described his 'āśrama' as resorted to by 'ṛṣi-saṅghas' (orders of ṛk-composing Vedic priest-teachers) who did not allow any animals (deer, etc , ) to be slain there(2), and where Rāma could apprehend no other possible breach of 'āśrama' rules (on his part) except in the matter of animal life. But Rāma (bluntly) showed him his arms, and said that it would be very regrettable indeed if he went on hunting animals (as he must) (3), for it would pain Sūtiksṇa,—so he could not stay for long in his 'āśrama' (4) accordingly, submitting to vegetarian diet for that night, the three set out again next morning,—to visit (and explore the possibilities of) the whole of the 'āśrama-maṇḍalanī' of the Dandaka 'ṛṣis'.

[ At this stage (5), as already noted in another connection, Sītā was alarmed to see her self-denying scholarly husband rapidly turning into a shrewd and aggressive adventurer, and argued with him regarding his propriety in engaging in hostilities with the Rākṣasa rulers of the Dandaka, in order to

(1) In Buddha-ic manner, of other proto-Buddhist traits infra, viz., 'ahimsā' and vegetarianism in this 'āśrama'.

(2) So there were meat-eating ṛṣis as well as vegetarian ṛṣis in Vedic India, the struggle between 'sacrifice' and 'ahimsā' is therefore proto-Buddhist and ancient.

(3) Rāma was strongly brāhmanically minded, and supported the orthodox hierarchy in all its merits and defects rather blindly.

(4) This 'ur-brāhmanic' peace-loving, meek 'āśrama' was evidently of no use to Rāma and his ambitious, diplomatic, warlike schemes.

(5) Rām III 9-10

relieve the *śis* of the āśramas of that region this she thought was not his business and she would not like him to attack the Rākṣasas unprovoked without any offence on their part while the *śis* were after all not suffering from any real calamity but Rāma presumed he was wiser than any woman and pleaded his promise to punish the Rākṣasas made before these *śis* so there could be no going back from the war path (1) ]

Within that monastic zone was an āśrama (2) very close to the Pañcāpsaras lake (or tank) where one monk (mool) Māṇḍa karmī giving up his efforts took 5 dancing girls (of the āśrama) (3) to wives (pativratam agatāḥ) and lived with them in revelries in a house built in the midst of the tank (4)

As before Rāma and his party found the āśramas of the āśrama maṇḍala prosperous (śrīmaṇ) covered with kuśa (mattings) and cīra nr alik (haogings) everywhere and covered as it were with a sacred halo of Vedie learning entering these āśramas they dwelt there happily respected by inmates they went by turns to the āśramas of those with whom (he or they) (5) had formerly (i.e. in boyhood or girlhood) resided (as students) they spent 10 months 1 year 4 months, 5 or 6 months, many months 1½ months 3 months or 8 months at different āśramas —altogether 10 years of pleasant rambles and residence in them

After these 10 years of inter āśrama touring Rāma and his party returned to Sūtīkṣya's āśrama and stayed there for

(1) Evidently Rāma was interfering in a struggle between Rākṣasas temporal rulers and the monastic heads in Janasthāna, while he was living in exile in the Rākṣasa realm,—and hence the Rākṣasas were rightly indignant.

(2) Following details from Rām. III 11

(3) Appearances ; *vide ante*

(4) Of the delights of the Saptajana āśrama *ante* ; this tradition is referred to in the Mbh. also, where the dancing-girls are said to have been cursed ; the reversion of dedicated virgins to social life as wives was regarded as a sin ; cf. the cases of Hemī and Vedavatī noted *ante*

(5) The text does not say to whom this previous residence in Daṇḍaka āśramas is to be attributed ; the reference may be to Rāma, or Lakṣmaṇa or Sitā, or any two or all of them



some time, but again set out (1) to meet 'Agastya' in his 'āśrama', which was 5 'yojanas' from Sutiksna's establishment.

On the way they came to the 'āśrama' of a junior Āgastya teacher, a younger brother of the senior (2), 4 'yojanas' to the south of Sutiksna's 'āśrama' on whose outskirts were 'pippalī' woodlands (3), many big tanks, pools and groves, in the 'āśrama' were thousands of fruit trees, and heaps of fire-wood, 'peaks' of smoke rose above it, and the pungent odours of its 'pippalī' plantations (3) filled it, the inmates bathed in secluded bathing-places (or baths) (4), and worshipped (idols, perhaps) with gathered flowers (4). Received by 'Agastya's' brother, Rāma and his party stayed there for one night, and then went 1 'yojana' further south to the senior Agastya's 'āśrama'.

The Agastyas (5), as noted before, had made the southern districts safe for monasteries by keeping the Rāksasa rulers at bay (apparently by some military organisation) (6), who became friendly and gentle after the advent (and rise) of the Āgastyas in Deccan. This 'āśrama' of the senior Agastya was comparatively a pure one morally, for though some 10 years afterwards Rāma found himself in the company of the usual 'āśrama' 'apsarases' when he revisited it, no false, cunning, wicked or unrighteous person could remain here in residence.

(1) Apparently Sutiksna's 'āśrama' failed to join Rāma's organization even now, after it had been strengthened by this 10 years' propagandism.

(2) Following details from Rām III, II, .

(3) Either Pepper (red or black) or 'pipul' (a pungent pod used in medicines), in any case, characteristic of Deccan tablelands and hills.

(4) A contrast seems to be intended between the generally open bathing 'ghāts' of other 'āśramas' and the secluded, covered baths of this institution, such baths were apparently pre-Āryan in India—Another implied contrast is in the mode of worship,—'sacrifices' giving place to 'flower-offerings', in the senior Agastya's 'āśrama' there were many idols, as we shall now see.

(5) Following details from Rām III, 11—13, 73—76, 76—82.

(6) The Agastyan teachers were experts in arms, as noted elsewhere, Rāma had military training under this senior Agastya, who also presented him various and numerous weapons, and appeared in connection with Rāma's battles at Pañcavaṇī. These armed Agastyan monk-'gurus' were thus an earlier parallel to the Sikh organization, and was clearly of great help in furthering Rāma's ambition in the South.

Lakṣmaṇa entered the āśrama first to announce Rama and Sītā to the ṛṣis introduced himself and them to a favourite ( sammata ) pupil of Agastya ( who he thought must have heard of their vicissitudes ) and requested him to announce them to Agastya in the fire-altar hall this he did and was ordered to show in the three visitors the pupil came back to Lakṣmaṇa at the āśrama-pada ( i.e. the steps or the compound of the monastery ) and asked him where Rāma and Sītā were waiting Lakṣmaṇa having showed them to the pupil he received them with honour and escorted the party in — They saw the smoke columns of the āśrama spreading through the woodlands the tame deer and warbling birds and the decorations of clra ( silk hangings ) and chaplets ( festoons ) passing through the monastery they saw the sthanas ( niches pedestals altars sanctuaries or temples ) of various gods mainly Vedic i.e. Agni Viśvasvat Soma Bhaga Dhatā Indra Vāyu Varuna Gayatri etc and some Paurāṇic i.e. Garuda Dharma and Kṛttikēśa (1) — Agastya now came out to meet them surrounded by his pupils — a majestic figure (2) Rama and his companions bowed to his feet he embraced Rāma and offered seats water arghyas and food he then presented various weapons to Rāma — bows quivers, arrows swords and scabbards Agastya was particularly pleased with the conduct of Sītā who he thought would adorn the āśramas she lived in and he recommended attention to her comforts He knew all about king Daśaratha's affairs and Rāma's vicissitudes and was interested in his career for he loved Rāma Rama had promised to stay with Agastya at his āśrama but he could see that Rāma wanted to live a more retired and pleasant life with Sītā and so he advised them to reside at Pañcavaṇī an āśrama settlement not far from his own as being more suitable for Sītā's rambles

(1) This shows that even in the 15th century B.C. in the Vedic-Epic age the 'ṛṣi' āśramas were idolatrous temple monasteries (like later 'maṭhas') with a developed iconoplastic art; idols of Vedic gods are referred to in Vedic literature itself

(2) Not a senescent cripple, as Vedic ṛṣis are often supposed to have been.

Some time after Sītā's banishment, Rāma had occasion to revisit the monastery of this senior Agastya.—The Kosalan brāhmanas appear to have resented the gradual encroachment of even Śūdras upon the brāhmanical privilege of studentship and learning(1), and to have induced Rāma to institute something like an Inquisition within the Kośalan sphere of influence(2),—as a result of which a prominent Śūdra monk and scholar, Śambūka, was arrested and beheaded(3) This Śambūka was either a member of Agastya's 'āśrama'(4), or had started an 'āśrama' of his own very close to it, for he was found engaged in studies beside a lake on the north side of the Śaivala Hills (in the Vindhyan group) in the

(1) The Kośalan brāhmanas would be mainly Vāsīṣṭhas, who had to their credit the famous ancient struggle with the Kṣatriya Kauśikas on the same point

(2) Widened now, after the Rikṣasa wars in Deccan and beyond.—Religious persecutions were not uncommon in Ancient India

(3) Rām VII. 73—76 (N S Pr.) gives the story of Śambūka the Śūdra student with much brāhmanical colouring. Probably the fable thereof of the death of a brāhman boy stands for ruin of careers for brāhman boys owing to Śūdras flocking to studentship The account given of the gradual and successive encroachment of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras upon the privilege of 'tapas' (studentship and learning) enjoyed by Brāhmanas alone at first, is apparently a late one, but it is correct according to the historical tradition in the Vedic as well as the Epic-Purāṇic literature —It appears that an ill advised Śūdra aspired to be and became a 'mahā-tapā' (a great monk-scholar), on the frontiers of Rāma's realm (which geographical particular is quite consistent with other facts), the Kośalan brāhmanas expressed great resentment at Rāma's court, and demanded extermination of Śūdra 'tāpasas', for 1/6 of the results (good or bad) of 'tapas' and 'adhīta' (monastic discipline and scholarship) went to the King, so Rāma was advised to 'search' ( 'mṛgasya' ) his kingdom for those transgressors As a result of this 'search', Śambūka was arrested, engaged in highest 'tapas', by a lake on the north side of the Śaivala hills, Rāma praised him first, and got from him his declaration of Śūdra birth, and then at once beheaded him (which shows that Śūdras of that age often posed as brāhmanas and got themselves admitted into brāhmanical schools for acquiring 'tapas' and 'adhīta').

(4) The Agastyas of an earlier age too were liberal the Kauśika opponents of the Vāsīṣṭhas were affiliated to their ranks Cf. 'gotra' accounts in Purāṇic tradition re brāhman groups (AIBT)

southern region,—which was also the site of Agastya's āśrama, which Rāma visited immediately after puoishing Sāmbhaka and where the news had arrived before him

Rama had made the journey to Agastya's āśrama by citanot(1) and was welcomed and invited to spend a day there. Agastya had already heard of Rāma's chastisement of Sāmbhaka the Śūdra monk scholar and either to appease him for having harboured that Śūdra aspirant to brāhmanhood or to reward him for removing an unwelcome Śūdra rival teacher he offered a valuable ancient ornament to Rāma as king of the realm. In this connexion Agastya explained to Rāma how this antique had come to the possession of his āśrama (2) and how ancient the site of his āśrama was going back to

(1) Following details from Rām. VII 6-82 (N S. Pr)

(2) The Agastyas got the antique thus: they had migrated into the Daṇḍaka country between the Vindhya and the Salva hills and come to a well-kept (artificial?) lake 1 yojana wide beside which stood a large ancient and wonderful monastery (Jārama) bereft of its community of monk-scholars ('tapasvi jana'); in (a memorial structure in) the midst of the lake they discovered a well-preserved dead body; the details that follow show that this was clearly a royal mummy about which contemporary local traditions and legends followed somewhat Egyptian notions: e.g. the spirit returning to the mummy and enjoying attended by Jārama dancing girls, as in actual life, etc.; this mummy belonged to Prince Śveta, elder brother of Suratha and son of King Sudra of Vidarbha (a Sudra was a brahman friend of Bhīma Vaidarbha's son (Damant's brother), 14 generations or cir 200 years before Rāma; Suratha may be the same as Rathavara, Dāśaratha, or Ekādāśaratha all of whom succeeded Bhīma; Sudra may have usurped the throne of Vaidarbha, for Dama and Damant are not mentioned in the succession lists); he abdicated in favour of Suratha and adopted a life of study (tapas) in that desert āśrama [which was thus much older than the 17th cent. B. C.]; but he looked too much to his own bodily needs, and did not practice charity hence his soul could not be delivered from his mummy; his earthly belongings, curious ornaments, etc., were then given away to (1) Agastya; the mummy then dissolved (or crumbled) and the soul of Prince Śveta was set free [we are reminded of Tutankhamen]; e. idently the Agastyas had pilfered the coffin in quest of treasures, while they were re-establishing that ancient abbey and gathered together something like a school museum from which one of those curios was presented to Rāma by the head of the monastery

the time of Prince Śveta of Vīdarbha, and even to that of the Bhṛgu priests of the Ikṣvāku prince Danda(1) Rāma saw the 'āśrama' inmates, some of the best knowers of 'brahma' ( 'brahma-vit-tama's ) reciting sacred texts ( 'brāhmaṇas' ) in worship of the evening sun(2), he too at sunset bathed in the lake where the 'āśrama' 'apsarases' (dedicated virgins) were bathing and disporting themselves(3), and after sun-worship returned to the 'āśrama', where he was given a good

(1) The region in which the 'āśrama' where Prince Śveta retired was situated, was the forest country of Dandaka, once the flourishing Kingdom of Danda the Ikṣvāku King who had his capital at the city of Madhumanta, between the Vindhya and the Saivala hills, later on known as 'Janasthāna', being subsequently settled by 'tāpasas' (monk-scholars) [It appears therefore that the real name was 'Yajña-sthāna', the Land of Sacrifices, i.e., Monastic Zone = 'āśrama-maṇḍala' of Dandaka, — 'Yajña' being Prākṛitised into 'jana', — for which cf. vein 'janai' from 'yajñōpavīta']. How 'Danda-viṣaya' became desolate, and was subsequently re-peopled by 'īśa āśramas', is thus described — King Danda had a Bhārgava chaplain, whose oldest daughter Arajā, residing in studentship ('āśrama-vāsinī') in the Bhṛgu monastery, excited his lust, Danda accosted her alone strolling in the 'āśrama' park, courted her, and almost won her, but though she suggested proper procedure in view of legal marriage, he forcibly violated her, and returned to his capital Madhumanta close by, while weeping she awaited her father near the 'āśrama', the Bhārgava 'ṛsi' was informed by his pupils, and returned to the 'āśrama' raging, and severely scolded his pupils and his daughter, he vowed destruction of Danda's Kingdom within 7 days, accordingly the members of the ' 'āśrama' and the 'avasatha' (the monastic school and its residential quarters or boarding-house) vacated them, and settled outside the limits of Danda's Kingdom (or city), Arajā was left at the abandoned Bhārgava 'āśrama' to perish along with Danda, beside that same 'yojana'-wide lake, where Śveta later on settled in 'āśrama' life, and Agastya too, after him — Agastya's 'āśrama' was therefore cir. 800 years old when Rāma saw it in the middle of the 14th cent. B C, i.e., it dated from the 22nd cent. B C

(2) 'Brahma' here may be taken either in the Upaniṣadic sense (which occurs in the Av and is claimed to be an ancient conception in it), or as = AV itself 'brāhmaṇa' also may be taken here either in the general sense of sacred texts, or in the special sense of a certain class of theological speculations (which occurs in the Av)

(3) Note the mixed bathing in the 'āśramas', — the basis of many Vedic and Epic-Purāṇic stories about teachers and students

vegetarian dinner(1) and rested for the night on the morrow Rama departed greeted by the *ṛṣis* and promising other visits later on (2)

In Rama's time a third Āgastya *ṛṣi* was influential on the Tamra parvī near its mouth the *śāḍrama* being apparently in the suburbs of the golden-gated Pandya capital (3) We have already seen that this southernmost part of India and the Island of Laḥka were at this time studded with *śāramas* settlements amongst which Marica's *śārama* was one(4) The *śāramas* of Laḥkīśra thus described(5) —They were close to the city of Laḥka and on the sea coasts —amidst rocks and crags delightful pools and swarms of aquatic birds or orchards and banana cocoa nut and toddy palm plantations the whole (coastal) region was ornamented (as it were) with monasteries and their altars In these *śāramas* were numerous swarming female inmates in residence along with the *Vāla* *khilyas* and other (monkish orders) —beauties in gorgeous ornaments and garlands dancing-girls skilful in various sports, and lady visitors and women pilgrims who paid honour unto the monasteries and their members on all sides

(1) This vegetarian dinner is rather unexpected; as we have already seen, the Agastyas appreciated mutton,—and along with other great *ṛṣis* this Agastya had accepted Rāma's offer of a cow for slaughter at the coronation reception; perhaps Rāma himself had taken to vegetarianism after separation from Sītā. The only *śārama* mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa where meat diet was banned was that of Suṭikya (of a distinctly proto-Buddhist type) and there Rāma and his party could not afford to stay by sacrificing their habitual meat diet

(2) For the close touch between *śāramas* and the Kōśālan court, *vide ante*.

(3) Rām. IV., 41 The Southern peoples were known to the Aśva country of the Kuru-Pāṇḍava in the 8th cent. B. C.; they must have been known to the non-Aśva or Mānavas of Kōśala and S. N. and Central India much earlier being probably of the same stock and civilisation. Hence reference to Pāṇḍyas is not an anachronism in the Rāmāyaṇa.

(4) *Vide ante* re education and *śāramas* amongst the Rākṣasas.

(5) Rām. III 25

\* commodious, bugle-sounding, decorated chariots coursed about with gay men and women driving them, sandal, "takkola" [=vern 'śītalcinī', a fragrant valuable spice], pepper, and other plantations were attached to these 'āśramas', and near about them were pearl and other fisheries, and adjacent cities famed for their wealth and women(1)

Under circumstances already noted, Rāma instructed by the senior Agastya teacher of his day, made (1 e, re-organised) an 'āśrama-pada' (an educational settlement) at Pañcavatī(2), 2 'yojanas' from the Agastyan 'āśrama', and close to the Godāvarī(3), the road to it was shown by Agastya, monk-students ('tāpasas') were already living there, and Rāma was to be their Protector (or Warden)(4)

(1) Geographically the description is very accurate, the profusion and influence of the 'āśranins', and the prominent position of women in the 'āśrama' system, is in keeping with the references to Rāksasa education noted before, the co-educated, car-driving, school and temple-visiting women of Lankā were evidently free in their social life (as also in Kīṣkindhā), perhaps freer than their sisters in Northern India, the Deccan and the South have this feature even to-day, the economic resources of the Southern 'āśramas' are worth noting orchards, plantations and fisheries were owned by the monasteries, and adjacent cities were their markets

(2) Perhaps the original was Pañca-vāṇi (vāṇi) = "The Five Houses (or Abbeys)", rather than 'The Five Banyans'.

(3) Pañcavatī being the later Nāsik, the monasteries of the 2 Agastya brothers would be at Ellora (=Ilvala-pura, associated with Agastyan achievements) and Ajanṭā, the distance between Nāsik and Ellora is actually about double that between Ellora and Ajanṭā, as in the Epic text. In this connection it is interesting to note that the sculptures of Ellora are perhaps referred to in the idols alleged to have been seen by Rāma in Agastya's 'monastery'. It is quite possible that the cave temples (or rather monasteries of the 'cave' site of the 'āśrama' of Matanga in Kīṣkindhā, elsewhere) of Ellora and Ajanṭā (or even of Nāsik) have existed from the 2nd or 3rd millennium B. C., with periodical remodellings during successive religious movements, like Buddhism or Neo-Brāhmanism.

(4) Of, the Atharva-vedic 'Gopa', Warden, of the 'āśramas', ante,

While on the way to Pañca vañi Rāma and his party met Jajayu chief of a 'Valnateya' or Suparna tribe(s) who undertook the protection of Sitā (who now stayed behind with him) while Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa proceeded to Pañcavañi to establish their āśrama suitably. Jajayu also was to live with Rāma there (apparently in retirement from his state in accordance with custom) — Lakṣmaṇa was entrusted with the building of an āśrama (i.e. āśrama quarters for a teacher's family of three) quite a spacious timber built cottage (parva-māḥa) (2) was constructed with floors levelled and well beaten (i.e. pucca) with goodly pillars (stambha) with long bamboos (maśkaras) as beams (kṛta vapraṇam) with the roofing spread on rafters of śāmi timber (śāmi ākhaṣa) bound with strong ropes and well-covered with kuśa kuśa and sara reeds (probably woven into thick matting) (3). This cottage was distinct from the Pañca vañi āśrama for it is stated that (from a bath in the Godavari the three returned to the āśrama and then entered the new built cottage) (4).

(1) Jajayu was a friend of King Daśaratha earlier on, his wife had been connected with the Ikṣvāku or Ikṣvāku dynasty. They were a people of the Western Ghats and the Western Coast of India with inland in the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea) according to Purāṇic tradition. [The Dravidian name Jajānu is comparable to another Epic Māgadhā name Jajā (rā, la)-vañdha of similar meaning "apparently connected with the (Indigera) golden Jajā (rā) — supplanted by ancient non-Aryan dynasty and the; vide ākṣi (or Jajā) sculpture at Gunturaj].

(2) Parva-māḥa is clearly cut of place here and must be taken in the sense of timber. Palāśa, āśvattha and śāmi trees being called āśma, i.e. of rafters being of śāmi timber in the same context.

(3) This style of cottage-building is "very much akin to that described in the Atharva-veda; the combination of timber with bamboo reeds and ropes — kuśa a mixture of types possible only in a region like Kōṭāḥ comprising salween and as well as riparian districts; probably here we have Rāma introducing a Kōṭāḥ āśrama building style in a region which must have mostly used stone and natural caves for sacred structures from remote ages. A parva-māḥa or timber-built cottage is however mentioned as an adjunct (a guest house) in Aśvī's monastery not far from Uṭrakōṭa where also Rāma had built himself a similar cottage amongst other monastic structures.

(4) Rām. III 27 (beg.)



besides there were other master teachers ( 'maharṣis' ) there already (along with the resident monk-students over whom Rāma was going to be the Warden), who honoured Rāma during his stay there,—and these must have had their quarters.

Soon afterwards, the sister-consort of the viceroy of Jānasthāna, known as ' the Pearl Princess ' (1) visited the Pañca-vaṣī monastery (2), probably to inspect the situation produced by the advent of members of a foreign and hostile dynasty into an ' āśrama ' under Rāksasa control. The princess, however, fell in love with the newcomers, Rāma and Lakṣmana, and being rejected by them, vowed vengeance, hence followed a war which terminated with the downfall of the Rāksasa empire. Rāma first argued with Khara about his oppressive attitude towards the monasteries, and then declared he would avenge it, on his obtaining a decisive victory over Khara and his army, the Senior Agastya (from the neighbouring monastery at Ellora) and other ' ṛṣis ' and ' ṛajarṣis ' (both brāhman and ksatriya teachers) congratulated him in the battle field, and pointed out that their object of inducing Rāma to reside in the Dandaka ' āśramas ' was now fulfilled there was thus a longstanding and powerful conspiracy at Ś'arabhaṅga and Agastya's ' āśramas ', which used the willing Kośalan princes for its own ends. After the battle, Rāma, Lakṣmana and Sītā (3), along with the ' maharṣis ', again entered the monastery,—from which they had apparently been driven to the neighbouring hills by Khara's army

(1) Khara and Dūṣana, who governed Decan, were brothers, and were first cousins to the then ' Iravan ', of whose sister Khara was the ' nātha ' or husband (probably along with Dūṣana), the Sanskritised name of this princess is a ludicrous distortion of some original Dravidian appellation like ' Surupnagar ' or ' Surupanākhā ', the ' Pearl Princess ' or the ' Crown Jewel '—For the relationships, vide AISI, i.e. primitive marriage forms

(2) Many instances are known, in the Epics and the Purāṇas, of princesses visiting ' āśramas ', and the Rāmāyaṇic cases of such interest, patronage or supervision, have already been noted

(3) Who was rightly in foud castus over her husband's heroic fidelity

When presently the Irāivan with Mārīca an old enemy of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa arrived at Pañca vaṭī to entice them away and abduct Sītā they found Rāma's cottage (within the āśrama) surrounded by rows of banana trees and green lawns there was an adjacent banana hower or pavillion (kadallīghaṭaka) and karnikāra groves the enclosed compound was entered by a gateway (dvāram) Sītā was roving about (In the morning) plucking flowers in various groves as she espied the golden deer (1) she called out Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (apparently engaged in studies) from within the house persistently urged by her yet rightly apprehending an ambush near about (2) Rāma went out on hunt asking Lakṣmaṇa to arm himself and protect Sītā along with Jaṭīyu Jaṭīyu however must have been residing in a separate and somewhat distant block of the āśrama' for he got no scent of the rape until it was too late, and she was being carried off on Rāvaṇa's car (3) Jaṭīyu who happened at the time to be vanaspatīgataḥ i.e. to be roaming amongst the tall trees of the āśrama park or to

(1) Perhaps it were only the horns that were artfully gilt, to catch the fancy of Sītā, who, as we have seen, had a craze for souvenirs and curiosities of the chase; to avert suspicion the Rākṣasa conspirators must have let loose a number of animals and not only one golden deer; the deer would of course be domesticated and trained for leading into ambuscades (nothing strange in ancient skirmishes)

(2) It was evidently unsafe at the Pañca vaṭī monastery then, after the open war with the King's deputy and insult to his sister; the situation at Oṭrakūṭa monastery after Rāma had settled there and roused Rākṣasa hostility leading to bloodshed, is a parallel (vide ante); perhaps Rāma and his party were now (as at Oṭrakūṭa) living in the monastery ever in a state of armed defence with a small number of monkish adherents; this number at Pañca vaṭī, however must have been larger than at Oṭrakūṭa for here he had strengthened his position very much by a decisive victory against the temporal power though greater troubles for the future were obvious and expected

(3) From the whole account it is clear that the āśrama pada where Rāma had settled was quite an extensive one; vide also infra.

have been upon a big tree (hewing logs of firewood), intercepted the royal abductor, and fought him in the 'āśrama' grounds, but fell, Sītā bewailed her friend embracing him, but was torn away from him. It would appear from the context that the fight between Rāvana and Jaṭāyu was witnessed by other inmates of the 'āśrama', but none else ventured to resist the 'Iraivan', and remained passive in the absence of Rāma and Laksmana(1)

Rāvana had entered Rāma's cottage in the habit of an itinerant monk-teacher ('pari-vrājaka') wearing glossy silken robes of 'kāśāya' and 'kusumbha' varieties, shoes ('upā-nah'), and the hair in a top-knot ('śikhā'), and bearing an umbrella ('chatra'), the staff of Investiture ('danda'), and alms-bowl and dish ('kamandalu' and 'pātra') hung from the left shoulder(2) — Sītā offered him 'āsana' and 'bṛsī' (carpet and cushion) for comfortable seating, and water for a wash ('pādyā'), and invited him to a meal of boiled or cooked vegetables and fruits (which were ready in stock), promising him venison, pork and other meats on Rāma's return from the hunt(3),—all this under the impression that he was a 'brāhman' teacher, and although he made indecent speeches and proposals at the outset, she went on answering his queries, fearing displeasure of the guest, whom she soon found to be no other than the King of the realm, railing at her as

(1) They too must have heard the deceptive last wail of Mārica and concluded that Rāma had been killed in an ambush, Jātāyu however was actuated not by considerations of monastic policy and prudence but by friendship for Daśaratha's family

(2) The silk stuffs and 'danda' are quite orthodox Vedic, as also other items of the habit generally, Rāvana was a 'Pulastya' brāhman, hence his 'śikha' would be a 'pulastī-kuparda' (vide AISH re costumes), according to Epic-Purāṇic tradition, 'chatra' and 'upā-nah' were first used in India by the Ikṣvākus and Bhrgus, both of which groups of peoples had, according to the same tradition, been long settled in Central India and the Deccan tablelands (e.g., the ancient Bhrgu monastery at Ellora above described, and the Mūnva Kingdom S. of the Gangā and the Narmadā)

(3) Note diet and furniture in a teacher's quarters, other details infra

being a mādha paṇḍita mānini a silly woman priding herself on her wit and learning who failed to appreciate the glorious offer of a King's love and riches

Hours after the abduction Rāma returning from the hunt after many delays(1) arrived at the adjacent outer blocks (pratīśraya) of the āśrama revolving many doubts in these blocks he found all vacant and no trace of Sītā then he came to his own quarters (svam āśramam) not finding her there he searched the vihāra deśān etad tad ity eva — i.e. looked for Sītā in all the parts blocks or cells of the vihāra or monastery building after that he looked for her in the āvasātha (hostel or boarding house) then all about the uśāsthāna the site or area of cottages i.e. the teachers quarters like that of Rāma coming again to his own parṇa-śālā (timber built cottage) he found it bereft of Sītā — with scattered goat skins (ajina) and kuśa reed seats and mats crumpled (praviḍḍha) carpets (aśanaś) and rent (vi praviḍḍha) cushions and bed canopies (brāhkaśa) (2) then convinced that Sītā was neither in the

(1) Rāma could not have returned from the chase very soon after the rape as in that case he could very well have pursued the abductor. Apparently it is strange that on his arrival nobody informed him of what had happened, while he was ransacking the whole monastery in its various blocks; the only clues were obtained from the dying statements of Jaṭāyu and from the pet animals of the āśrama who faced and looked towards the direction whither Sītā was carried off. But a swift and sudden raid, and imperial threats, could easily have non-plussed a monkish crowd however machinating so that they neither resisted Sītā's abduction nor dared give any information about it; collusion and defection also might easily have played their part; from the context it would appear that Rāma found the whole monastic area vacated after the royal raid, so that there was none to enlighten him.

(2) Kaśa with brāh can only mean canopy over bed; kaśa implies a dome shape, and is applied to tents and hemispherical vessels. It is however possible that a Prākṛtic form khaśa = khaṭvā cot is the original of kaśa here — Note the cottage furniture again

'parna śālā' nor anywhere else within the 'āśrama-pada'(1), the two brothers came out on the 'āśrama' 'mārga' or road, and on it found Sītā's flower-ornaments(2), and traces of the fight between Jatāyu and Rāvana, and of the attempts of Sītā to escape at various places along the roadside(3)

No account of Rāmāyanic āśramas would be complete without that of the great Bhṛgu poet Vālmīki —As already noted, he was at first a resident 'ṛṣi' in one of the Citrakūta monasteries, he had welcomed the royal exiles when they adopted the 'āśrama' life at Citrakūta, and they had set up their cottage close beside his 'āśrama', possibly he was the same as the Kulapatī of the whole 'āśrama' settlement, who, on the dangerous growth of hostility between Rāma and the rulers of the land, seceded from the Citrakūta 'Kula' with the majority of teachers and pupils to join the 'āśrama' of one Aśva not very far from it. The next time he is referred to, —in connection with Sītā's visit to his 'āśrama' and her forced retirement there,—we find him as the head of an 'āśrama-padam' (school settlement) at the confluence of the Tamasā and the

(1) From this and the other preceding particulars it would appear that Sītā was free to spend her time in all parts of the monastery, whether in the 'vihāra-deśān', in the 'āvasathas', in the 'prati-śraya', in the 'uṭṭaja-sthāna', or in the 'parna-śālā',—which was her 'svam āśramam', this enumeration of parts gives a fairly clear plan of an Epic-Vedic 'āśrama' of the 14th cent B C

(2) Artistic flower ornaments are even nowadays made and worn by Southern Indian women as a matter of daily ordinary toilet

(3) Pañca-vaṭī was not in a trackless wilderness, there was one road leading from the Agastyan 'āśramas' (Ellora and Ajantā) to it, and this other road, whereby Rāma now travelled, led right across the Deccan to lake Pampā and Mt Rṣyamūk(h) a [ht 'Stag's Head', or 'Bear's Head' with 'rkṣa' for 'rṣya,'] beside the monastery of Matanga, and thence to the Kīṣkindhā City [Possibly the original form was 'Kīkḷi-nāḍu' ('nāṭa'), traceable in mod 'Kakḷi-nāḍa' (Coconada of the maps), another ancient place-name with 'nāḍu' has been preserved in the Rgvedic 'Beha-nāṭa'—which however may be the same as the former, 'b' and 'k' being easily confusable in script ]

Jahnavī(1) on the south bank of the Gaṅgā and also along the Tamasa(2) The site indicated is within easy distance of Citrakūṭa and may well have been that of the āśrama of Aśva above referred to which was augmented by the secessors from Citrakūṭa The āśrama settlement was on the main commercial and military road from Ayodhya on the Sarayū in Kosala to Madhura on the Yamuna in Śurasena and the Kosalan armies colonists traders craftsmen and artists under the conquering brother of Rāma (Śatrughna) all passed and repassed through this cultural centre(3)—which was 7 or 8 vīśas (or night encampments) distant from Madhura and 2 from Ayodhya(4) From the texts where the desertion of Sītā and her subsequent welcome and admission into Vālmīki's āśrama are described(5) it would appear that the āśrama buildings were just opposite the end of the royal road leading from the capital Ajodhyā to the Gaṅgā and that chariots standing there (at the ferry) could be seen from the āśrama across the river so also it is stated that Lakṣmaṇa could witness from the other bank of the Gaṅgā the sampravēśana (admission) ceremonies of Sītā into the āśrama From Ayodhya to the ferry(5) opposite the āśramas on the Gaṅgā (6) the journey was made by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa by chariot—rather quicker than ordinary trips which involved two nights' halts—for they only spent one

(1) Rām I 2, in modern district of Allahabad

(2) Rām. VII 35 (45, N & Pr)

(3) Rām. VII 79 (with 77 and 83) (P.C.B.) 78 (P.C.B.); 84—85 (P.C.B.) A already noted the Kosalan influence was brought in by the Bhṛṅga monasteries of Madhurā, and Vālmīki's Bhṛṅga abbot encouraged it

(4) Rām VII 79 and 84 (P.C.B.) 78 (P.C.B.)

(5) Rām. VII 35 ff (P.C.B.) [45 ff (N&Pr)]

(6) The plural would show that Vālmīki's was the lead not of one but of a number of monastic institutions grouped together at this confluence of the Tamasa and the Gaṅgā



Thus when Śatrughna arriving from Ayodhyā asked permission to reside ( vas ) in the āśrama for one night and Vālmīki welcomed him saying that this āśrama (building) was his own as it were being of the Rāghavas as well as of the Kula (Monastic School Corporation)(1) so that he could have the benefit of the āśrama's hospitality without hesitation—the old abbot was not flattering but stating a fact that the āśrama had been founded by an Ikāvāku prince a century and a quarter before(2)

As already noted Sītā's āśramaic culture survived the rapid succession of the infamy and calamities of abduction the joys and sorrows of subsequent release and the glamour and festivities of the Restoration—and within a year of court life she expressed a desire(3) to visit the āśramas on the Gaṅgā (under Vālmīki whom she knew at Citrakūṭa) and spend a night there. She took with her various costly jewels and robes for presenting them to the wives of the monk teachers ( munis )(4)—little knowing that this opportunity would not be missed by a sensitive and intriguing court to get rid of her by cloistering her there for ever. Though Lakṣmaṇa tried to persuade Sītā that this arrangement was the best of a bad affair and that the famous muni (monk teacher) Vālmīki being a great friend of the late King Daśaratha residence with him in her exile would be quite safe and comfortable yet Sītā's position there was now different and delicate for as she apprehended she might easily be questioned by her old acquaintances the munis about the cause of her sudden fall from favour. We have already seen how the children of the monk teachers ( muni dāśakas ) spying Sītā crying alone in the āśrama grounds ran to inform Vālmīki.

(1) The text may also be taken to mean "being of the Rāghav Kula or Dynasty"

(2) Previous details from Rām VII 8 (FOR)

(3) Following details from Rām VII 55-60 (FOR) [45-50 (NSP)].

(4) Monks of the time were evidently married as a rule celibates being exceptional; and they appreciated well-dressed wives



and suggested his taking charge of her, how he then proceeded with his pupils (‘śiṣyas’) with offerings of respect (‘arghya’) for Sītā (either as Queen or simply as a lady), welcomed her expressing his conviction in her chastity and asking her to repose confidence in him, and asked her to accept the ‘arghya’ and enter his āśrama as her own home for within that group of monastic institutions and close by his own ‘āśrama’ there was an establishment of ‘tāpāsīs’, a convent of nuns and women-students, abiding by ‘tapas’ (Vedic study), who would always cherish Sītā as their own selves (or as their own child). Seeing Vālmīki approaching with Sītā following him, the wives of the monk-teachers came forward in delight to meet him, and said, ‘Welcome to thee for thou art come after a long time here, we all greet thee and await thy instructions’. Vālmīki then introduced Sītā, declared her innocence and commended her to their affectionate treatment and respect, specially as this was the behest of their ‘guru’ (Master, Principal). Repeating his charge again and again to the wives of the ‘munis’ (whom he addressed with ‘bhavati Your Presence, though he was their ‘guru’), Vālmīki returned to his own (block of the) ‘āśrama’, with the pupils (‘śiṣyas’) who had accompanied him and Sītā to the convent.

This tragic separation of Sītā and her presence in his ‘āśrama’ must have drawn Vālmīki’s attention to her and her consort’s whole eventful life and thus supplied him with a fit subject for an Epic, which he and his whole ‘āśrama’ worked at continuously for 12 or even 16 years from now giving trial recitations and performances from time to time(1). Thus random verses composed by the great teacher-poet, even as he would walk to and from the ‘āśrama’ bathing ‘ghāts’ (‘tīrtha’),—with a disciple in attendance at the bath, with pitcher and barken vestment (‘valkala’),—were forthwith learnt, recited and set to music by his pupils, who were at once taken into confidence(2). A portion of the Epic, containing the

(1) E g in Rām I 4, vide *mūla*

(2) R m I 2 vide *mūla*

family history of Rāma was actually ready and recited with music by the women students or nuns of the convent attached to Vālmiki's āśrama and this Śatrughna had the privilege of listening to; he also heard the well nigh completed Rāmāyaṇa 1 year later 4 years before Rāma

About four months after Sītā's admission(1) into Vālmiki's āśrama her brother-in-law Śatrughna arrived there from Ayodhya *en route* to Madhura as detailed above to halt for a night—and after a look round the ancient relics of the monastery was allotted excellent quarters (vasam uttamam) in one of the cottages of the āśrama. That very night while Śatrughna was staying there Sītā gave birth to her twins in the āśrama and boys sons of the monk teachers announced it to Vālmiki at midnight—who went there and saw the twins performed the natal rites and ceremonies and instructed the elderly ladies of the āśrama who were in attendance. These matrons chanted the name and pedigree of Rāma the father of the twin babes. Śatrughna heard all these at midnight and going up to Sītā's cottage(2) said

(1) Following det II from Rām VII 7 (PCB)

(2) From structure I detail so far referred to. It would seem that there were several buildings here; the same monastic area, one of them being the residence of the Master; some of the other blocks were for men pupils, and at least one separate establishment was reserved for women-student and nuns who were taught and governed by the wife of the monk teachers and with whom other elderly matrons, nurses and chaperons were in residence; the monk teachers and their wives had apparently separate cottages individually (as in other āśramas before described); several cottages (with hardly any use of one another) were maintained in reserve for guest. Śatrughna stayed in one such; Sītā was allotted a separate cottage (as much a *vasam uttamam* as that of Śatrughna) probably partly owing to her rank and educational attainments (*etc. etc.*) and partly for her impending confinement. We shall see presently that the āśrama could provide halling accommodation for at least 300 warriors and had something like an amphitheatre where these 300 as well as all the āśrama inmates could assemble to listen to Epic recitations and music. There were also āśrama bathing ghāṭas at the confluence of the Tamsā and the Gāṅgā.

'good luck to the mother', and passed the long Śrāvana (August)(1) night in joy

Twelve years afterwards, on his way back to Ayodhyā from Madhurā (which he had by now finally settled), Śatrughna once again halted and resided at Vālmiki's 'āśrama' for a night with a small retinue, viz., 100 horse and 100 chariots (i.e., c. 300 warriors)(2), as guests of the 'āśrama'(3), after congratulations on the victory over the 'Lavana' ('Iraivan') of Madhurā(4), Vālmiki entertained all his guests with 'Rāma-Gītam' (or '2-Caritam'), apparently as part of the congratulatory programme(5)

This 'Rāma'-gītam' was a past history of Rāma, composed in correct 'Śamskr̥ta' or refined literary speech (6), the whole performance was sweet with songs, sung in three octaves, with the melody of stringed instruments accompanying, and set in time-bars of equal value or duration ('sama-tāla'), the Epic performance continued the whole night, and produced tragic emotions and admiration in the

(1) From the contexts it would appear that Sītā was cloistered in Vālmiki's convent in spring-time, that her twins were born towards the close of the rains by the middle of August, and that Śatrughna began his conquest of Madhurā early in September (in proper autumn season, though an advance column had preceded him)

(2) A chariot carried 1 or 2 bow men and 1 armed driver

(3) Vide n. 2, p. 157

(4) Madhu, the Yādava King of Madhurā, had married a sister of the 'Iraivan' of Janasthāna and Laukū, and it was natural that their son should use the Dravidian title of 'Iraivan' (= 'Lavana', in old Saursenī dialect), and follow his maternal uncle's policy in hierarchic affairs. Probably the Madhurā of the South was founded in this time

(5) Compare and contrast the programme of entertainments on Bharata's visit to Bharadvāja's 'āśrama' at Pravāga (*ante*)

(6) Not necessarily the same as what we call Sanskrit, the original language may have been a Dravidian one (spoken by Kosalan Mūnvas, and akin to Vīnara and Pulastya speech, *vide ante*)

audience who visualised scenes as in a dream (1) Śatrughna's soldiers were anxious to know more about the history of the composition of the Epic and about its chief reciters but Śatrughna (who evidently had come to know about Sītā and her twin sons share in the matter) stifled their curiosity by saying that it was unbecoming for outsider soldiers to question the venerable Vālmiki about the affairs of his monastery.

Apart from these specific instances there were other partial or gradually more and more complete rehearsals of the Epic performance during the 16 years between Sītā's coming to the āśrama and the invitation of the whole āśrama to the Abhamedha assembly convened by Rāma in the Naimiṣa monastic area on the Gomatī.

The great teacher we are told (2) was very anxious for the application i.e. the recitation performance rendering or staging of his epic so he used to select from among his pupils the most suitable reciters for public chanting in gatherings of ṛis and initiated (i.e. āśrama educated iit twice born) gentlemen in the midst of (formal) saṁhā's (synods) of ṛis in paṇḍas (councils) of kings and in jana saṁśuddas (popular assemblies) at the court as well as on the rathya's (chariot roads) of cities and the cross-country raja mārgas (royal roads being the commercial and military routes) Sītā's twin sons Kuśa and Lava were amongst such selected reciters their qualifications as āśrama pupils fit for taking part in public epic performances are thus described:—They were gifted with a good retentive memory were steady in Vedic studies being taught the epic literatures for embellishing (upavṛṇḥayārtham)

(1) It is clear that the ancient Epic performance here referred to included lyric and dramatic elements well and recitals or katha-katā was alternated with vocal and instrumental music and tableaux scenic representations or short stage acts. It is to be noted that kuśīlva came to mean actors and dancers and not merely epic reciters.

(2) The following details are from Rām. I. 4

their Vedic education (1), they were appreciative of the imports ('tattva') of the Epic, and were of great soul, yet modest, they had known the significance of the science of Music and were versed in the art of steady as well as modulating voice-productions, and in all the varieties of vocal music ('gīti'), they were gifted with a musical voice, spoke sweetly, and were of handsome features—Only such qualified pupils were explained and instructed in ('ava-grāhita' and 'upa-dīsta') the epic,—which was sweet in (plain) reading as well as in (musical) chanting, three measures,—fast, medium and slow,—were applied in such chantings, so were seven classes of tunes ('jātibhiḥ') (2), different chords ('tantrī') (3), and different cadences ('lava'), the epic portrayed all the several dominant sentiments ('rasas') known to literature, and was of a good and moral tone, the whole of it was "made dealable in words or speeches" ('vāco-vidheyam') (4)—In the 'ṛṣi' audiences the epic performances evoked engrossed attention and pleasure (interest), emotions and tearful eyes, wonder and applause, admiration and blessing, and after critical praises(5), rewards were given to the reciters in recognition of their merit—Vālmīki's pupils in this way received

(1) This is actually the claim reportedly made by the Purāṇas, which regard Vedic texts and education by itself as futile without the equally meritorious and important Purāṇic ( i.e., Epic ) lore and training. Vide AHT

(2) Of tunes of 'odava' and 'khāḍava' 'jātis' in later Indian music

(3) These are called 'relā' or 'ched' in modern Indian music, they are produced by striking with plectrum or fingers several strings of an instrument together or in rapid succession as an accompaniment or background to the main melody played on the same instrument

(4) This may mean that the original Rāmāyana was composed in the form of dialogues, or that the epic was, for purposes of presentation before audiences, dramatised, so as to arrange the verses into speeches of the dramatis personae, which could be committed to memory by the actors

(5) It is noteworthy that while audiences in the 'ṛṣi' academies are stated to have been critical in their praises ( before awards of merit ), those in the court circles do not criticise but only praise and encourage

from the assembled (śaṁsṭhita) ṛṣi academicians (ṛṣi sabhuśad) prizes of the following description —Water jars (kalāga) sacred vases (kamayalu) and sacrificial vessels axes faggot ropes or straps and bundles of sacred fire sticks (being the ancient matches) cushioned seats (brāṣa) of udumbara timber cushions (brāṣa) (of kusa or other stuffing or matting) and black deer skins (investiture) girdles made of plaited muṣṭa grass blades Initiation hoods (being outer and upper garments upaviṣṭa) and (artificial) wings of matted locks (jāṭā bandhanaiṣi) barked vestments (vālkala) loin cloths (being inner and lower garments) kāṣṭhīya silks and Cīra silks (sereṣ cloth?) — These were evidently articles forming part of the ordinary equipment of resident students in the āśramas of the time (1) — The reciters trained by Vālmīki were indeed admired everywhere not in the academies and assemblies of teachers (ṛṣi śaṁsṭhads and ṛṣi sabhās) on the public chariot roads and royal roads and in the popular assemblies (jana śaṁsṭhads) and kings' councils (parīśads) they were even invited with honour to the palaces (vāsma) by the kings personally and recommended to the courtiers and nobles (2) —

(1) The list is interesting; the items are all true Vedic (cf. AVIII, 1) the brāṣa of udumbara and kusa; the rare Vedic upaviṣṭa was an upper and outer garment (not a slender thread girdle) with which an initiated student was invested; the reference to a present of jāṭā bandhanaiṣi shows that the traditional matted locks of Vedic student were not due to actual mortification but to a school custom of wearing special scholars' wigs; vālkala is perhaps still to be seen in the ākhaṇḍa of modern śādhus and kāṣṭhīya (of kashī = tassar-thread embroidery) and cīra silks in the modern buff tassar and scarlet cloth of pundits and devotees; we have already seen that senior Vedic students were ceremonially invested with the Girdle and the Staff perhaps the Śākhāśālā Dharmā in its earlier and more suitable form; ṛṣiśaṁsṭhā and ṛṣiśabhā are vestments.

(2) We have seen in the AV that popular assembly hall in towns and villages were used for public literary disputations; for connection of āśramas and āśrama scholars with royal courts and other references and

These aristocratic audiences too found the singing and music sweet, the words and expression (thereof) of apparent and clear import and of great variety, as they listened, long past events (in which probably they had taken part themselves) were as it were visualised,—for the singers had entered into the very spirit of the epic (or the poet) and rendered accordingly, they sang with a wealth of notes, yet in chorus ('sahita'),—sweetly, yet passionately (rapt in emotions),—more passionately as the audience praised, the volume and pitch of voice varied under the control of the singers themselves, and their voices rang like the (subtle) echoes ('laya') of chords ('tantrī'),—gladdening the whole body, mind and heart (the nerves, intellect and feelings) (1), for the songs were rendered with all the wealth (richness) of the 'mārga' (the standard or classical) mode (of music) (2)

Four years after Śatrughna had listened to the Rāma-gītām at Vālmīki's 'āśrama' in honour of his Madhurā conquests, Rāma held in 'Aśvamedha' in the Naimiṣa, to which Vālmīki was invited with his whole monastery,—and they played a prominent part in its proceedings and functions

To this festal assembly (3) pious, scholarly poet-teachers ('tapasvī ṛṣi's) from other countries also were

(1) The effects of Music were evidently as much appreciated in Anc India as in Anc Greece.

(2) We have seen elsewhere that prevalence of musical training, of bards and minstrels, and of dramatic societies, were a feature of Ayodhyān culture, and that music (and dancing) also flourished in the Vānara and Rākṣasa 'āśramas' and towns, the 'mārga' mode would naturally be the Kōśalan mode as opposed to the other modes prevalent in the Southern Māruva regions [ It is possible however to take 'mārga' as = 'belonging to the roads' (cf. epic performances on 'rathyās' and 'mārgas'), i.e., the mode affected and developed by the wandering minstrels of the land ]

(3) The following details are from Rām VII 104—112 (PCR)

invited together with their wives (1) so also were dancers and actors (2) from other countries. In the procession led by Bharata from Ayodhyā itself to the sacrificial holdings (yajña vāṣa) (3) in the Nalmisa on the Gomati were included scholars (in Nigama) and soldiers dancers and actors merchants with merchandise and numerous youthful women (4).

Thither Vālmīki arrived with his pupils and parties of teachers (śiṣyas and ṛṣi-saṅghāta) (5) and occupied pretty cottages (uśajan) at one end of the residential area for āśrama teachers (ṛṣi vāṣa) (6) and the numerous śakaṣas of his āśrama (7) full of equipments and provisions were garaged close to the elegant quarters built specially for Vālmīki (Vālmīki vāṣa) (8). Vālmīki now instructed his pupils with Kuśa and Lava at their head dressed in their academic wigs and barked vestments (jaṣa and valkala) to proceed to all parts of the Sacrificial Settlement (Yajña vāṣa) (9) viz. to the Residential

(1) The wives of āśrama teachers had clearly a high position in society or at court being educated and often themselves engaged in the educational work of the āśramas — Śītā, who was present in this assembly was thus not alone in a masculine crowd, but must have felt strong and easy in the company of so many ladies of similar training from different āśramas including those from her own.

(2) Along with them came talāvacarāḥ (ṛ) — tank frequenters deep-movers — i.e., swimmers and divers (ṛ). Perhaps these were specially invited to entertain in water-sports the festival being held on the Gomati.

(3) *Vide infra*, for the sense of vāṣa.

(4) O female cooks; perhaps only youthful courtesans.

(5) Probably saṅghāta here has a special sense akin to saṅgha (cf. ṛṣi-saṅgha elsewhere in this Epic) i. which case 'ṛṣi-saṅghāta' = associated (or association of) teachers.

(6) *Vide infra* for sense of vāṣa here.

(7) Of a/c the 100 śakaṣas of Vālmīki's school party proceeding on excursion to Mithilā.

(8) For sense of vāṣa *vide infra*.

(9) For vāṣa *vide infra*.



Area for Teachers ('Rsi-vāṭa') (1), and the Hostels (or Boarding Houses) for 'āśrama' educated gentlemen ('brahmanas'), and along the chariot-drives and royal roads ('rathyās' and 'rājā-mārgas') (2) to the palaces of the invited princes ('rāja-grhas') (3), the Gateway of Rāma's palace, and the Sacrificial Site before the priests ('ṛtviks),—and to chant the whole Rāmāyana, if

(1) 'Yajñā-vāṭas' are often referred to in Epn and Purāṇa literature, they correspond to the Sacrificial Areas with (temporary) residences of members of the royal family and courtiers, as described in the VV Smṛitīs, etc., the arrangements and structures are essentially the same, whether in the Vedic texts or in the Purāṇas, Mahābhārta and Rāmāyaṇa, and similar in all great festive gatherings, religious or secular, like Rājāsūya, Aśvamedha, or Svayamvara. The classification " 'Yajñā-vāṭa' — 'Rsi-vāṭa' — Vālmīkī-vāṭa' indicates some sort of town-planning as is involved in the laying out of an Exhibition site (and Rāma's 'Aśvamedha' is described to have been a high class 'melé', fair, or exhibition), the entire 'Aśvamedha'-'padam' being generally called the 'Yajñā-vāṭa' (the Holy Settlement), one portion of which was the 'Rsi-vāṭa' (the Abbots Town), wherein again was the 'Vālmīkī-vāṭa' (the Vālmīkī Mansions) amongst other 'vāṭas' (comprising 'vāṭas' named after other great 'āśrama' heads, so also there were other Wards of the Camp City set apart for Boarding Houses for brāhmanas, for Residences of the invited Princes, for the Royal Palace, and for the Sacrificial Site proper — 'Vāṭa' in these descriptions is of the same origin as Vern 'vāṭ' [ with 'ghūṭ' (u) ], 'vāṭ' 'bād' (r)ī', 'bārū', 'bere' 'berū', — all designating various forms of house-structure, the uses of 'vāṭ' (u)' singly and with 'ghūṭ' (u)' indicate that an only and special sense of 'vāṭa' was a well-planned series of dwelling houses on either side of a metalled road, an avenue, leading to the steps on a tank or river-side (a traditional Indian plan). For 'vāṭa' = "settlement or group of houses, cf. Dravidian place names like 'Bez-vāḍa', 'Gudi-vāḍa', 'Bhila vāḍi', 'Sāvanta-vāḍi', etc.

(2) The urban character of the Yajñā-vāṭa, is clearly shown by this provision of broad metalled roads in it suitable for carriage and caravan traffic, as we have seen such a settlement is 'vāṭa', — rows of houses on metalled roads.

(3) 'Gṛha' (in the plural) signified in Vedic times fairly large buildings, either for aristocratic residences (e.g., in the very ancient city name 'Rāja-grha') or for funeral memorials (mausoleums), vide AISR re house-structures.

Rama himself called for a hearing before the *raja* in session they were not to disobey his behest (1)

According to Vālmiki's instructions 20 cantos of the Epic were to be sung each day (2) no money was to be made by the pupils performers by these recitals (3) the chantings were to be to the accompaniment of stringed instruments

As the visitors to the *Viamedha* found it the Epic presented before them was of a new or modern type (*apūrva*) — in that it was of the class (*jāti*) of recitable poetry (*paṭhya*) (4)

(1) Pupils of Vālmiki's *āśrama* (perhaps *Kuśa* and *Lava*) must naturally have developed an attitude of disapproval and opposition towards Rama and Vālmiki's exuberant apprehended outburst of feeling on their part and had to caution them

(2) An Epic Cant instead of chanting at a stretch cannot but consist of more than 50 śloka on an average 20 cantos were chanted each day at most 40 pairs of reciters (*La* and *Kuśa* forming one such and the leading pair) or 40 pupils were probably engaged for the day; one canto would take about 1 1/2 hours to finish so that the daily performance took up 10 hours time being 1 1/2 of the intervals between the *Viamedha* ceremonies (which is not improbable) — At present the *Rāmāyaṇa* contains about 24000 verses and 500 cantos in the first 6 Books — about 120 cantos (the account of the *Viamedha* begins at canto 104) if it is held that the Epic presented before Rama carried his history up to date (which is very likely for it is stated that the concluding portions of the Epic coincide well with the above details giving 25 or 30 days as the duration of these daily recitals — which is reasonable) thus it is stated that after the first day's hearing Rama arranged to have performances for many days more

(3) This peculiar caution shows that ordinarily pupils of *āśramas* did make money by epic recitals or other exhibitions of literary dramatic or artistic skill probably for the benefit of their school; large sums of money could be raised in this way for Rama is stated to have offered 10000 gold coins for a single day's performance

(4) Recitable epic poems were therefore known before Vālmiki; contrary to later popular notions, Vālmiki is here not called the *ādikavi* or the first epic poet but is represented as a comparative or later poet who only improved upon pre-existing literary types

yet embellished with tunes and music ('*gyānti*') (1) it was set in various measures ('*pramāṇa*') (2), and it was composed by a 'modern' (i.e. contemporary) professor of literature ('*apīṭvācārī*') (3).

Rāma heard about the itinerant boy-musicians, and being curious called together a great assembly to sit between other business of the 'Māyamedha' celebrations (4), and requested the student reciters to give a performance before it. As estimated 20 cantos were done the first day, and 15,000 gold coins were

(1) The combination of music with epic poetry was therefore the originality claimed by Valmiki (as also the use of the 'anupubh' metre for such epic poetry, probably Purāṇic texts before his time were written in prose or some early Vedic metre: the Vedic examples of 'Rābha' and 'Nīravampa' give some idea of what old Purāṇic verses may have been like, in style and language, the Vedic 'gāthā' while Purāṇic in origin and character, were rather ballads set to music, not epic musicals rendered for the theatre (in Greek sense) it is noteworthy that the Kṛśṇas, who were largely associated with 'gāthā' and 'rābha' literature, were a kindred group to the śibhgas to which Valmiki belonged.

(2) 'Pramāṇa' was also an early structural term, of Vedic 'chanilas' used both of poetry and of buildings (cfr. AṢṬRA building activities) in Vedic lit. the poets' work and the builders' or other craftsmen's work are often compared and described in similar terms: it would seem as if the terminology of a highly developed pre-Āryan material civilization were applied by Āryan settlers to language and literature which was their special gift to India (as to various other ancient lands).

(3) There were therefore earlier 'āśrama' teachers who had left epic (i.e., Purāṇic) poems behind them that were known in Rāma and Vālmiki's time (14th cent. B.C.), this is fully in accordance with the Purāṇic tradition, which knows of ancient and special heroic ballads about much earlier Kōśālan or other Eastern Kings than Rāma, e.g., about Pithu, Māndhātā, Triśaṅku, Harisohandra, Sagara, etc.

(4) This is quite in accordance with the Vedic (and Purāṇic) practice at the bigger sacrifices, theological disputations, musical performances, 'rāvanya' ballads, traditional histories, etc., were some of the interim festal entertainments, along with much revelry and license,

offered by Rāma (1) but respectfully declined ( ) the author ship and nature of the epic and (details about) the poet's educational establishment ( *īratī śhu* ) (3) were revealed by Lava and Kuśa who introduced themselves to Rāma as Vālmiki's pupils it was then arranged to have the whole epic recited for many days more (4)

The assembly before which Kuśa Lava and other pupils of Vālmiki gave an epic performance consisted of Princes citizens ( *pauras* ) and people from the countryside ( *jana padas* ) great monks ( *maha munis* ) and initiated Vedic scholars ( *vaidika dvijas* ) learned men ( *paññitas* ) widely read men ( *vahu śrutas* ) and scholars in Vīgama astrologists scholars in the linguistic and Phonetic Sciences

(1) *U. L. n. 3, p. 213*: if the *Vivamedha* lasted for month, and 30 days were taken for the complete presentation of the Epic of about 600 cantos, Rāma may be taken to have been prepared to pay  $30 \times 120 \times 1 = 3,60,000$  gold pieces for the Epic which is not incredible when compared with the well-known tradition that Firdausi and Muband of Ghazni, 21 centuries later

(2) The reason for declining is perhaps disclosed in the ardent request that Vālmiki later on made before Rāma in the assembly that Śītā be restored as the Kosalan Queen (and consequently his favourite pupils be recognised as the heirs-apparent to the throne) — which he appears to have regarded as the best reward for his merit and labours

(3) The Vedic sense of *pratiśhā* is settlement or sanctuary establishment or institution — not reputation; in the famous Vālmikian couplet, where the Nishāda ruler is reprimanded for his flagrant wrong one of a couple of doves the poet teacher orders that the offending person should never again enter his school settlement ( *pratiśhā* ) — it is not a curse meaning that he may never attain reputation (as is popularly supposed) [Nishādas were employed at Vālmiki's āsrama to ply his ferry boats on the Ganges; the ordinary population of the country along the Ganges (and its south bank) from near about Prayāga to Varanasi appears from the epic to have been Nishāda (Dīśa or even Bākasa) while to the West and South of Prayāga towards Oitrakūṭa and East and South of the River it was Vānara (Golāgula and Bkva) — quite in accordance with the Purāṇic tradition of the distribution of this go

(4) About 25 or 30 day probably

( 'Śabda-vidāh' ), scholars in Law and Custom ( 'vṛtta-sūtras' ) (1), and Logicians (Causationalists 'hātukān' ), Purāṇic bards and chroniclers, and scholars in Purāṇic lore ( 'Paurāṇikas' and 'Purāṇa-jñas' ) (2), poets and prosodists (scholars in 'chandas' ), persons knowing the characteristics of Sounds ( 'śabd' scholars in musical science ), professional musicians ( 'gāndharvān' ) experts in songs and dances art critics ( 'kalā-mātra-śiṣa-jñān' ), and painters ( 'citra-jñān' ) (3)

Understanding from the concluding portions that Lava and Kuśa were his own sons Rāma one day brought about the second and fatal 'Test' of Sītā, the 'reis' who had assembled for the Śvamedha and their pupils (along with many others) were invited by Rāma to be present at Sītā's Oath in the King's Council ( 'Paṇṣad' ) the 'reis' then approved of the procedure, as she swore in declaration of her fidelity, the monks applauded her (4) but the strain of the conflicting emotions of the situation was too much for her tired nerves and broken heart, and at the climax of her life's drama she passed away in the midst of the applauses and welcome of the

assembly (1) The day after that the Epic performance by Valmiki's pupils was finished and the Aśvamedha sacrifice ended—and with it practically the history of the last great Ikṣvāku King (2)

It remains now to describe the āśramas that are stated in the epic to have existed in various earlier periods before Rāma's time. Of these we have already noted three important ones viz. those of the Bhṛgu chaplain of the Ikṣvāku King Danda, the Vidarbha Prince Śiśu and the Ikṣvāku King Saudāsa Kalmāṣapāda (3). There remain three others viz. the āśramas of the Manva King Tṛṇavinda of Vaiśālī and of the Vūśiṣṭha and the Viśvumitra pair whose rivalry was a famous event of ancient history. Tṛṇavinda lived 120 to 170 years before Rāma and Devanij Vūśiṣṭha and his rival Viśvaratha Viśvumitra Kauśika some 400 years before him (4).

King Tṛṇavinda had (according to custom) retired to an āśrama (apparently founded by himself) in the (Himalaya) mountains (5) with his family. To this āśrama repaired a theology teacher (brahmarṣi) of the Pulastya Order (6) for discourses (prasaṅga) on the Sacred Law (Dharma) and ultimately settled down there (vas) engaged in studies.

(1) The story of the Eartha engulfing her at her request is only a superimposed story and a flat one.

(2) After this time the Aśvas of the midlands gradually rose to power; the pre-Aśva civilisation had now reached the limit of its days; hence the great importance of Rāmāyaṇic cultural details.

(3) About 780, 160 and 14½ years before Rāma.

(4) *Vid.* Pargiter AISH for the collation of Purāṇic and Vedic traditions about this event.

(5) Cf. to the Himalayan āśrama of another prince Kuśadhvaṃja of the neighbouring State of Mithilā where too his daughter was educated in Vedic manner.

(6) The Pulastyas had a distinctive style of hair-dressing or wig (cf. AISH); they were akin to the Māruvas (= Kūṭyavas) and the Bākavas, being often identified with the latter.

( 'svādhyāya' ) (1) He however felt disturbed by the presence of sportive yet irreproachable ( 'aninditā' ) maidens, daughters of brāhman and ksatriya teachers ( 'r̥sis' and 'rājarsis' ) (2), singing, dancing, and playing, so he behaved in such manner (3), that these 'āśrama' girls ceased frequenting the precincts where he lived, from apprehension of being some day found to have become illegitimate mothers, but Tṛṇavinda's daughter (4) was bold enough to meet him alone (5) while he was engaged in studies ( 'svādhyāya' ) and reading aloud ( 'vedasrutim srutvā' ), attracted by his reading of the Vedic texts, and became enciente by him, much perturbed, she repaired to her father's 'āśrama' (quarters), and questioned by him, related her adventure, how she went alone to the Pulastya scholar. Ascertaining what the matter was, Tṛṇavinda took his daughter to the 'Pulastya' and requested him to accept her as wife, she being endowed with similar qualifications as he himself (6), and being herself ready to be his wife ( 'udyatā svayam' ) (7), and to be ever in attendance on him

(1) Apparently as a colleague teacher or senior scholar, with a separate block to himself, within the 'āśrama' of Tṛṇavinda, for later on Tṛṇavinda and this Pulastyan scholar are stated to have had separate but neighbouring 'āśrama-padam' or monastic blocks

(2) This may also mean the ordinary 'āśrama' teachers and the princely scholars living in retirement in the āśrama

(3) The edifying text says he cursed them with this danger, grossly amorous, indecent or licentious behaviour is often asserted in tradition of 'r̥sis' or their pupils in 'āśrama' The resident 'āśrama' girls were clearly fully grown up ones, and educated in music, dancing and Vedic literature, and came of respectable brāhman and ksatriya families

(4) She is called Il(ā)a-vil(d)ā in the Vaisālī genealogies, and noted as the ancestress of the Pulastyan 'Iraivan's of the Deccan and the South, she evidently appreciated Vedic learning, and was herself well-read (vi-śrutā) and further educated by her scholar husband

(5) Cf. Devayānī and Kaca, or Sakuntalā

(6) Vide n 4, it shows that men and women in the āśrama could receive the same standard of education, *vide ante re* same state of things in other contemp 'āśramas'

(7) That is, it was a case of 'Svayamvara', cf. Devayānī and Sakuntalā, again,

during his laborious studentship ( ārama ) at the ārama. The Pulastya desirous of accepting her as wife agreed heartily and Trāṣṭinda, bestowing his daughter on him repaired to his own ārama pada while she dwelt with him (1) pleasing him by her conduct and character. As she used to listen to and learn ( vi-kruta ) the Vedas from her husband reading ( adhi ) them her son was called Viskavas (2) —who too became a learned youth abiding by or delighting in the courses of (Vedic) study ( śrutīman vrata rata ) like his father. Viskavas became engaged in Vedic studies ( svādhyaṣa ) at an early age (3) and developed a fine character. A Bhīradvāja pū (4) learnt of this and gave him his daughter Deva varinī as wife wedded according to the law having in view eugenic good (5) (prajñavikṣikya

(1) Cf. Sujāta daughter of Uddālaka living with her father's pupil Kaśyapa husband in the same ārama (Xbb)

(2) Similar stories about pregnant wives of Vedic scholars reading the Veda along with their husbands and their sons as a result manifesting intellectual precocity and becoming learned and skillful — their fathers are often told in the ancient traditional literature (e.g., the case of Dirghatama Kula or Agnīshakra and others). All this shows that wives of ārama scholars received sufficient education (śikṣā in the ārama) before marriage to be able to follow their husband in their Vedic studies and to continue studies even after stepping into motherhood (vide other details in A1811)

(3) Precocity amongst ārama boys is often praised in traditional literature; vide n 2 above

(4) The contemporary Bhīradvāja (step 43 of Paragitarā list) were an influential priestly group who had engrafted themselves on the Paurava royal family in the Gāṅgā-Yamunā Doab and comprised the well-known Urukya, Kāpya, Śākṣī and Śakya-Gṛhya branches and amongst them were many Rgveda pū. This Bhīradvāja may have been one of these, and an earlier Kula pū of the Bhīradvāja ārama at Pūyā visited by Rāma and described before.

(5) Indian Society was perhaps the first to catch, state and encourage the eugenic aspect of marriage and to try to regulate social relations in view of eugenic ideals of the Dharmas and Kāma Sūtras.



buddhyā) Their son was Vaiśravaṇa, a 'lord of riches' (1), and he used to visit his parents in their monastery from time to time travelling by his 'Puspaka' (1)—The fugitive Rākṣasa chief (2) Sumālī's daughter, Kāikāsī, advised by her father, went to live in the 'āśrama' of Viśravaṇa (3), and wooed and won him

(1) This human and Purāṇic Vaiśravaṇa should not be confused with the god Kṛveṇa, called the Vaiśravaṇa, probably the god Kṛveṇa was optatively so designated in ancient times as having been specially worshipped or dear to the Vaiśravaṇas (desc. of Viśravaṇa, being Mānvas of Vaiśālī who became 'dhana-patis,' i.e., merchant-princes, 'lords of riches,' millionaires by trade, cf. Indra being called the 'Kauśika Indra,' or 'son of Vṛsanāsya,' etc., in Vedic lit., meaning that the Kauśikas were specially favoured by Indra, etc., the Vaiśravaṇas were of course nobles belonging to the Vaiśālī royal family, and Vaiśālī must have from the earliest days been one of the greatest trade centres of India, cf. the wealth of the Licchavi aristocrats (plutocrats) of Vaiśālī in a subsequent (Buddhist) age. The 'Puspaka' of the 'dhana-pati' son of Viśravaṇa (daughter's son of king Tṛṇavinda), seems to refer to a particular type of merchantship used by Vaiśālī merchant princes for river- and sea-borne trade, such a 'Puspaka' Rāma used for returning from Lankā, and this clearly was a ship (*vide* pargiter AIT), it is to be noted that the 2 ends of a sailing ship with the spreading sails in the middle would in a diagrammatic representation look like an opening 'puṣpa'. If the 'Puspaka' could go up to Viśravaṇa's 'āśrama,' this must have been situated at the foot of the mountains where the Gandakī broadens out into the plains. The above detail about Vaiśravaṇa indicates that scholars' sons with aristocratic (maternal) relations left 'āśrama' pursuits for trade and became millionaires but yet maintained connection with their father's schools.

(2) From the Rām̐yane account it would appear that these Rākṣasas had to flee from Peninsular India across the seas to the islands in the Eastern and Western Seas, abandoning even the island of Lankā adjacent to the mainland,—which was then occupied by the trading Vaiśravaṇas of Vaiśālī. By allying themselves with these half Mūruva half-Pulastyan Vaiśravaṇas, the fugitive Rākṣasas regained a footing in Lankā, and finally, with their enormous material resources, succeeded in carving out a dominion in maritime and peninsular India.

(3) Other chieftains' daughters too of this age went to live in the 'āśramas' to be educated: thus Vindhryassa-Pūṣṭila's daughter Abalya was sent to Mithilā to be educated under Śaradvān-Gotama (*vide ante*) in his school.

( bhaj' vr svayam ) (1) she was in advanced youth ( yauvanaṃ vyatīvarate ) and it was time for her giving away in marriage but suitors were not forthcoming for fear of rejection (1) of her sons Vihhīsaṃ engaged in Vedic studies ( svadhyaya ) in the Himalayan āśrama of his father (2) and he resolved to follow religiously all the life stages one after another

The monastery of the famous Vasiṣṭha who had a long struggle with the Kauśika laurata King Viśvāmitra about hierarchic rights and privileges abounded in (3) flowering plants creepers and trees various (domesticated) animals and tame deer it had its associations or groups of initiated students ( dvi ja saṅghas ) (4) successful schoolmen or graduated scholars ( siddha-caraṇas ) (5) poet teachers

(1) Of the already noticed cases of Abhaya and 'Gotama and Ilavilā and Pulastya ; love-making in the co-educational āśramas of those days was quite common. The following personal detail about Kaikas shows that girls of this age could be educated till at least about 25 or 30 and remain unmarried till then; such a woman would naturally be a problem for suitors, and would herself be nice in her choice ending finally by a forward wooing of a man to her fancy. Of the somewhat similar case of Veda vati ( bhajī ) daughter of Kuśādvaja.

(2) The persistent statement of the connection of Pulastya and Rikyasas with the Himalayan regions is remarkable; it is possible however that in many of these statements the himālaya of Sanskrit texts = Dravidian (1) malai, hills.

(3) The following details are from Bām. I 31 56, a brāhmanically retouched version of a genuine Pāṇini tradition.

(4) Of the various saṅghas mentioned consistently in connection with the other āśramas; thus mekhalīnāṃ mahī-saṅgha at Ajodhya, same as dīja saṅgha

(5) Cāraṇa —belonging to a Gārama or Vedic school; if a later meaning (perhaps a derivative one) of cāraṇa is adopted, siddha-cāraṇa would mean "accomplished birds" i.e. king pieces and ballads in the āśrama —not tall in improbable sense

( 'rsis' ), and groups of young scholars attached to them ( 'vāla-khilyas' ) (1)

When king Viśvaratha-Viśvāmitra of Kānyakubja paid him a visit there, 'Vasiṣṭha' ordered an 'asana' (carpet-seat) for him, and the royal guest, comfortably seated, enquired about his pupils, gardens, etc., on *his* part 'Vasiṣṭha' enquired in detail regarding the policies, administration, finances and foreign relations of the king,—the form of the questions showing that princes of the time looked up to the Vedic schools for approval of their manner of Government(2), in this way there was a prolonged and delightful conversation between the king and the teacher-priest —'Vasiṣṭha' then proposed to entertain Viśvāmitra, and his staff or army, right royally ( 'properly' ),—the king (of the land) being the best of guests to be honoured with solicitude, but though Viśvāmitra declared he was satisfied with the ordinary school fare of roots and fruits and water, and the honour shown, 'Vasiṣṭha' pressed him for a "reception" —A feast accordingly was prepared in the 'āśrama' by 'Śavalā' (3) for 'Vasiṣṭha's' royal

(1) 'Khilya' = belonging to a 'khila' or being of the nature of a 'khila', appendage or following, in an 'āśrama', therefore, 'vāla khilya's' would obviously mean the junior scholars following a senior scholar or tutor, specially as they are also often designated 'rsis' in traditional literature, i.e., they were young scholars who assisted (as 'khilas') their 'rsi'-teachers, perhaps we have here a sort of monitorial system, which has a parallel in the later medieval Indian 'vāl-caṭ' (der. from 'vāla-khilya'?) —Along with 'vāla-khilyas', 'vaikhāṇasas' are also mentioned here (as often elsewhere), these latter should in fitness of things refer to the diggers or builders of sacrificial altars in the monasteries, organised as a school band for rituals, and given the minute training required for this work, the 'vaikhāṇasas' would thus include these 'āśrama' students who prepared for the sacerdotal profession exclusively

(2) Cf AV XI 5, where kings are said to rule with the help of Vedic students.

(3) Śavalā = Surabhi, the cow-goddess, the patron deity of Viśiṣṭhas, Gotamas, and other priestly families of Egyptian cow goddess of priests. As indicated in VISII, probably the so called 'Vedic' brāhman clans were all pre-Aryan and akin to various West Asiatic groups, in race and civilization —The feast was so splendid that it was thought possible in an 'āśrama' only by the divine favour of the patroness of the 'āśrama', the cow-goddess Savitṛ

guests the *manu* satisfied all the six tastes and four ways of eating (1)—and included conical piles of rice fried rice (2), fried paddy and baked rice with curds (3) high class pastries (4) sugarcane honey and syrups (5) malreya wines and costly spirits (6) soups and chops of various enjoyable tastes (7)—all on silver plates or vessels (8)—King Visvāmitra was thus entertained along with the principal members of his harem (9) and with his chaplain and priests courtiers (officers) ministers and retainers (10)

(1) Salt sour sweet bitter pungent trident; chewing sucking licking and drinking

(2) This *polla* stands for *polla* = modern times; the var loc *polla* does not give any good sense

(3) *Dadhī polya* ; this is a better reading than *dadhī-kulā* canal of curd ( ) ; *polyāh* are referred to in early Vedic texts ( e / *Aiṣṭi* re marriage customs ) though derived from Dravidian *pull* from which *muri* and other vernacular words have come ; *polyāh* is of course=vern *muri* an Indian delicacy

(4) *Uccāracān bhakṣyān* dry sweet or pastries ( salted or sweet ) are called *bhakṣyān* in *Vāta. Kā. Bṛt.* ; they correspond to what is called in vern. *khāḍḍ* ; *uccāracān* may also mean highly spiced or richly seasoned.

(5) *Pāṇāni* these were made of various fruit juices with blood fruits thrown in and flavouring (described in *Vāta. Kā. Bṛt.* for example )

(6) *Āsava* ; for distinction bet. *Āsava* malreya surā etc. vide Vedic Index.

(7) *Sūpān* and *khāṇḍa* ; the former is a true Vedic item,—horse-flesh broth for example being much prized in the early Vedic age *khāṇḍa* = something that is hopped off or minced or prepared in bits or slices ; it may mean either a sweetmeat or a meat chop or cutlet ; coming together with *sūpān* the latter is the more probable sense and suited besides to the hunting activities in the *śāramas*

(8) *Gauḍa bhājāni* ; *gauḍa* = silver ; of the costly metal plate (copper gold etc.) displayed before King Bharata a party at the *Bhāradāja śārama* ; the var loc *gauḍa bhājāni* does not give a suitable sense

(9) *Bā tāpura varo* it may also mean with his chief wives. For Visvāmitra polygamy vide *Aiṣṭi*

(10) Of the similar entertainment of King Bharata with all his harem courtiers soldiers and retainers at the *Prayāga śārama* of *Bhāradāja* ; big monasteries therefore were known 8 centuries before that time.

The details of the struggle that followed between 'Vasiṣṭha' and Viśvāmitra over the possession of the divine cow Śavalā (1) show that,—(a) the wealth (specially in cattle) of the 'āśrama' excited the king's cupidity, (b) he claimed it on the ground that all treasures belong to the king, (c) on opposition he offered various fabulous substitutes as a price,—viz, heaps of silver 14,000 gold-bedecked elephants, 800 golden four-horsed chariots, 1010 noble horses (2), any amount of gold and gems, (d) on continued resistance he took away the 'āśrama' cattle by force (3), taking advantage of his privileges as a guest (4), (e) but he was subsequently attacked by mercenary Śaka, Yavana, Pahlava and other barbarians employed by the Vāsiṣṭha 'āśrama' (5), and was forced to flee from his kingdom. (f) Viśvāmitra re-issued from his forest refuge and ravaged the Vāsiṣṭha monastery, which was burnt and devastated and whence disciples fled by hundreds and thousands (6), so that for a time it was like a wilderness, (g) but 'Vasiṣṭha' rallied the monks and stemmed the Kauśika aggression

(1) *Vide* infra, and n 3, p 174

(2) In Purāṇic tradition, the Kauśika dynasty is proud of its rare breed of horses (*vide* AIHT and AISH)

(3) Perhaps what he took away was the idol of the cow goddess Śavalī or Surabhī or Nandinī, supposed to have brought prosperity to the Vāsiṣṭha 'āśrama', cattle-lifting was of course a common Vedic Kṣatriyan practice

(4) Of the extraordinary privilege allowed to guests of enjoying the wives of the host (in Mbh, c g)

(5) According to unanimous Purāṇic tradition, these barbarian races were very ancient inhabitants of northern and north-western frontiers, thus certain branches of early Ikṣvākus were Śakas, and branches of the Druhyus were Śakas and Yavanas, long before Viśvāmitra's time, some time later these Śakas and Yavanas joined the Haihaya-Yādavas in their depredations, were punished by King Sagara Aikṣvāka, but the Vasiṣṭhas secured favourable terms for them evidently there was a tradition of amity between them (*Vide* AIHT).

(6) Similar notices of monasteries being devastated and scholars fleeing are also found in the Purāṇas in other connections, e g, temp. Haihaya or Kālakaṇṭha raids.

successfully in person (1) (4) frustrated king Viśvāmitra vowed to become a brāhman hierarch himself (2) — This whole episode is nothing but the struggle between the head of a powerful monastery and the king of the land in which the latter is obliged to bow before hieratic influence and prestige but out of which he emerges successful in a sense by himself becoming the head of a rival monastic order and institution

After defeat by Vaśiṣṭha (3) and his monks (4) king Viśvāmitra along with his queen (5) went to the South (6) and engaged in brāhman training while four sons were born to them (7) after some time he was recognised in āśrama circles as a Kṣatriyan teacher (rājara) (8)

(1) We are reminded of the AV darśa investiture whereby the Vedic student was enjoined to stand for āśrama right against the oppression of Kings (vide etc.).

(2) His example was followed by other princes (especially Atlix) in considerable numbers as is evident from the Purāṇic genealogies

(3) It was the best of those termed as Kṣātra as well as Brāhmaṇa i.e. military as well as priestly sciences Rām I 65

(4) Following detail from Rām I 57; 59; 60; 61; 61-62; 63; 64; 65.

(5) It was not rare in Viśvāmitra's time for princesses to take to āśrama life; his own sister Satya atī had married a Bhārgava ṛṣi

(6) It is remarkable that the South is made the home of brāhmanic training for the Rāmīyanic age; this agrees fairly with other Rāmīyanic details about the āśramas of Dandakā (Janasthāna) and Līkindhī and Lāṅghī which were flourishing centres of hieratic culture. As suggested before probably it was the āśrama of Mātanga on the Pampī lake where Viśvāmitra had repaired for his brāhmanic training (Apparently it was this Southern connexion that led to many Viśvāmitra families to be classed as Palastiyas Rākṣasas and Agastiyas; vide AIT) — South here is clearly the country South of the Ganges and Kōśala; so also in Purāṇas the country between Magadhā and Andhra is called Tīrthakṣa land (vide AIBH)

(7) All these sons took to monastic life; the son who claimed the paternal Kānyakubja principality was a younger one by a Paurava princess Mādhavi, and was called Aśṭaka (for them vide AIBH)

(8) In the āśramas of this time the rājara were as we have seen elsewhere an usual class of teachers, who apparently taught Kṣatriyan literature and arts as opp. to the priestly

At this stage of his career, the famous anti-Vāśīṣṭha Ikṣvāku prince Triśanku, who had been forced into exile amongst the 'Cāṇḍālas' ('Nīṣādas') South of the Ganges by the Vāśīṣṭha hierarchy of Kośala, was received by Viśvāmitra at his 'āśrama' in that southern country, Viśvāmitra now commanded his disciples to invite his friends (colleagues, or heads of other neighbouring 'āśramas') with their pupils and 'ṛtviks' (priests attached to their monasteries) to Triśanku's sacrifice to be conducted by him (as his chaplain) (1), also other teachers ('ṛsis') and theologicians (brahma-vādins) were invited from various neighbouring countries (2), and joined the Sacrifice. The details of the Triśanku story would show that the Aila Viśvāmitra in alliance with the Southerners proceeded to establish a new Pantheon and system of worship and ritual (3), but that ultimately a compromise with the established hierarchy was arrived at. Owing however to serious disturbances in the South over Triśanku's affairs (in which the struggle between the rival priestly factions was a main element), Viśvāmitra with his disciples and family left for Puskara and established an 'āśrama' there (4).

While at Puṣkara 'āśrama', Viśvāmitra saved his relation, Sunahsepa-Bhārgava from being offered as a victim at a human

(1) It is clear that the 'Candāla' (Nīṣāda, Matauga) country was quite as civilized as Kosala, this is to be expected as Nīṣādas, etc, were akin to the Sūtas of Purāṇic fame, cf. also connection of Nīṣādas, etc, with 'āśramas' on the Ganges, ante, it is possible that 'Candāla' = (S) andāla = the Sanda tribe, being der from the Bhārgava Sanda, just as Mārkaṇḍeayas were der from Marka the Bhārgava (AIHT)

(2) From context, these countries would be Janasthāna and Kīṣkīndhū, where, as we have seen, there was no want of ṛsis and brahmavādins

(3) Of the ancient Egyptian religious revolutions under Amenhotep and Tutankhamen (1375-1350 B C), it is conceivable that the earlier S E Indian revolution was known to the Egyptians through their trade connection with Peninsular India

(4) Near Ajmir This is one of the prehistoric sites in India, and would perhaps repay thorough excavation

sacrifice arranged by Amharika of Ayodhyā (1) apparently by a lasting reform in the rituals of that age. After this reform Viśvamitra was recognised as a true ṛṣi at Puṣkara.

His troubles however had not ended. At the Puṣkara lake one day he met an āśrama dancing girl (apsaras) (2) Menaka bathing and confessing his passion he invited her to live with him as wife at his āśrama for 10 years; later he became ashamed of his fall and repentant of the sacrilege (of reclaiming an apsaras to household life) (3) and dismissed Menaka with sweet words (4). Apparently discredited in the North West Viśvamitra repaired to the foot of the Northern (*i.e.* Himālaya) mountains on the banks of the Kauṣiki and became a great teacher (maharṣi) (5) but he aspired to rise higher in the hieratic scale to the rank of a master of Theology (brahma ṛṣi) (6). But once again the weakness of the princely monk (7) for feminine charms endangered his reputation; another āśrama apsaras Rambhā attracted him for a time but was sternly repulsed; he then left for

(1) Apparently the same as Haricandra (*vide* AIT for this trade); Rām says Sumah epa was bought at Bhṛgu-tunga and was being escorted past Puṣkara by the Kōśala royal retinue.

(2) *vide ante*

(3) *vide ante* for other illustrations of this point

(4) This Viśvamitra and Menakā may or may not have been the same as bakuntalā's parents (whom Pargiter takes to be somewhat later *vide* AIT); it is possible that the episodes here affirmed of the first Viśvamitra belong actually to more than one; but the main outline may be accepted.

(5) The Kātyāyana had āśramas in this region (*vide ante*)

(6) The gradation of āśrama-ṛṣis as rājāṛṣi maharṣi and brahmārṣi shows a definite ecclesiastical organisation (taken together with muni Purāṇa munis tāpasas vaikhāṇasas vāla khilyas mokṣaḥ saṅghas muni-saṅghas ṛṣi-saṅghas etc.); *vide ante* for references to these terms.

(7) He was an Allā prince of Kānyakubja desc. from Purāṇava and Jahnu. Of the Vidyārbhan prince Sveta's continued addiction to worldly pleasures in monastic life, *ante*



'āśramas' further East, and practising penances (in a Buddhistic manner) (1), became recognised as a Master of Theology, and was after all reconciled to the Vāśīsthas (2)

(1) Of such mortifications at Satīkṣṇa's 'āśrama', also in the S. 2, (vide ante). It is noteworthy that Viśvāmitra could get highest brāhmanical training only in the S and E (vide A.H.I. on home of brāhmanism)

(2) By this time Viśvāmitra's principality on the Ganges had been lost along with many other states) to the aggressive Huhayn Yādavas so the Kuśikas became heretic families now



